**The Gospel of Luke**

**Lesson 12** Luke 5:17-39 Jesus Questioned by Religious Leaders!

**Questions:**

1. What important truth did you learn from the lecture and how does it apply to your life?
2. Read Wiebe pages 62-69.
3. What was the great desire of the Pharisees? How did the pharisaical religion   
   become a false religion?
4. What title given to Jesus is used for the first time in Luke’s gospel? What is the significance of this title?
5. What are three things that Jesus’ miracles reveal about Him?
6. What does Matthew’s response to Jesus’ call teach us about becoming a   
   disciple of Christ?
7. Read Luke 5:17-26 along with Matthew 9:1-8 and Mark 2:1-12.
8. According to Matthew 9:1 and Mark 2:1, what town did Jesus consider to be   
   his hometown? Find this town on a map. On what lake is the town located?
9. What additional details do you learn from Matthew and Mark concerning the   
   healing of the paralytic that are not included in the Luke account?

Before public events such as debates and athletic contests, the air is charged, and everyone just knows that “something is going to happen.” That feeling is equivalent to what backpackers sometimes experience when caught on a high mountain during a brewing storm. They see the hair of their fellow hikers stand straight out from their heads, and the metal frames of their packs glow with an eerie neon blue light called St. Elmo’s fire. The air is so charged with electricity that a lighting strike is imminent. For the hiker this is a signal to discard his pack and take   
cover. Luke 5:17 gives such a feeling: “On one of those days, as he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was with him to heal” (v. 17). There was power in the air, a spiritual St. Elmo’s fire. Mark adds in his account, “And many were gathered together, so that there was no more room, not even at the door (Mark 2:2).

The tension on this occasion came from two presences. First, there were the Pharisees and teachers of the Law, who had come from every tiny village of Galilee and Judea and even from Jerusalem—a broad-based investigative committee united in its eagerness to find something wrong with the young rabbi. The committee got to sit down, for they were people of honored rank (cf. Mark 2:6). Squeezed around them stood the curious populace. The other presence was, of course, Jesus, who sat across from them as he calmly preached about the kingdom. The more perceptive onlookers felt involuntary rushes of adrenaline, evidenced by goose bumps and moist palms. The atmosphere crackled. The room was charged.[[1]](#endnote-1)

1. From the Mark account, how did the four men show their love for the paralytic?
2. Read John 1:40-42. What was the very first thing Andrew did after following   
   Jesus for a day?
3. Read John 4:8-42. What did the Samaritan woman do as soon as she realized   
   who Jesus was?
4. What lessons to you learn from the four men, Andrew, and the Samaritan woman? What is The Great Commission? See Matthew 28:18-20 and Acts 1:8.

**LOVE**

How those four loved their friend! Their love overcame daunting obstacles. They would not be put off by the unyielding crowd. Because of their love they temporarily “vandalized” another’s property to achieve their end. They ignored the judgments of those around them. Perhaps the paralyzed man was a beloved brother or uncle of father. Or maybe he was simply a neighbor with whom they had grown up.

One thing is certain: they cared about him, and their love was the first reason for the deliverance he was about to experience. This is how it was and is with God too, for God so love the world that he made the ultimate sacrifice for us (cf. John 3:16). He dug, so to speak, through the roof   
of the world and lowered his Son down so Jesus could die for our sins.

The same holds true for missionaries. Their love for God produced a love for people and ultimately the inconvenience of moving into another culture despite the risk of being misunderstood. They may live in a difficult area where medical care is primitive, and they are unappreciated. Nothing but immense love would sustain this.

In our own lives, our family and friends will very likely not know the healing touch of Christ unless we have the kind of love that rips open roofs. If we truly love those around us, we will pray regularly and fervently for their salvation. We will risk being judged as fools in our efforts to win them to Christ. If we are not praying, if we are not prying open any roofs, do we really love them?[[2]](#endnote-2)

1. Do you have family members and/or friends who need to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ? What do you plan to do about this?
2. Who were the Pharisees and teachers of the law and why were they so opposed   
   to Jesus? See Matthew 2:3-4; 3:7-10; 6:5, 16; 7:15-16; Mark 2:16; John 2:12-20;   
   5:16-18; 6:41-42; 8:31-59.

*Pharisees and teachers of the law*. Opposition was rising in Galilee from these religious leaders. *Pharisees*. Mentioned here for the first time in Luke. Their name meaning “separated ones,” they numbered about 6,000 and were spread over the whole of Palestine. They were teachers in the synagogues, religious examples in the eyes of the people and self-appointed guardians of the law and its proper observance. They considered the interpretations and regulations handed down by tradition to be virtually as authoritative as Scripture (Mk 7:8-13). Already Jesus had run counter to the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem (Jn 5:16-18). Now they came to a home in Capernaum (Mk. 2:1-6) to hear and watch him. *Teachers of the law*. “Scribes,” who studied, interpreted, and taught the law (both written and oral). The majority of these teachers belonged to the party   
of the Pharisees.[[3]](#endnote-3)

1. In this account of the healing of the paralytic, what statement did Jesus make that revealed His deity and stirred up the resentment of the religious Jews?
2. Who alone can forgive sins? See Exodus 34:5-7; Psalm 103:3; 130:4; Daniel 9:9; Micah 7:18-19.
3. Who was Jesus claiming to be? Do you truly believe that Jesus is God?   
   See John 8:58; 10:30; 14:8-11.
4. What title did Jesus use to refer to Himself? The title ‘The Son of Man’ was Jesus’ favorite of himself. Why do you think this so? How did this title point to his deity (See Daniel 7:13-14)?

**What does it mean that Jesus is the Son of Man?**

Jesus is referred to as the “Son of Man” 88 times in the New Testament. In fact, *Son of Man*   
is the primary title Jesus used when referring to Himself (e.g., Matthew 12:32; 13:37; Luke 12:8; John 1:51). The only use of *Son of Man* in a clear reference to Jesus, spoken by someone other than Jesus, came from the lips of Stephen as he was being martyred (Acts 7:56).

***Son of Man* is a title of humanity.** Other titles for Christ, such as *Son of God*, are overt in their focus on His deity. *Son of Man*, in contrast, **focuses on the humanity of Christ**. God called the prophet Ezekiel “son of man” 93 times. In this way, God was simply calling Ezekiel a human being. *Son of man* is simply a periphrastic term for “human.” **Jesus Christ was truly a human being. He came “in the flesh” (1 John 4:2).**

***Son of Man* is a title of humility.** The Second Person of the Trinity, eternal in nature, left heaven’s glory and took on human flesh, becoming the Son of Man, born in a manger and “despised and rejected by mankind” (Isaiah 53:3). The Son of Man had “no place to lay his head” (Luke 9:58). The Son of Man ate and drank with sinners (Matthew 11:19). The Son of Man suffered at the hands of men (Matthew 17:12). This intentional lowering of His status from King of Heaven to Son of Man is the epitome of humility (see Philippians 2:6–8).

***Son of Man* is a title of deity.** Ezekiel may have been *a* son of man, but Jesus is *the* Son of   
Man. As such, Jesus is the supreme example of all that God intended mankind to be, the embodiment of truth and grace (John 1:14). In Him “all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form” (Colossians 2:9). For this reason, the Son of Man was able to forgive sins (Matthew 9:6). The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath (Mark 2:28). The Son of Man came to save lives   
(Luke 9:56; 19:10), rise from the dead (Mark 9:9), and execute judgment (John 5:27). At His trial before the high priest, Jesus said, “I say to all of you: From now on you will see the   
Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven” (Matthew 26:64). This statement immediately ended the trial, as the court accused the Lord of blasphemy and condemned Him to death (verses 65–66).

***Son of Man* is a fulfillment of prophecy.** Jesus’ claim before the high priest to be the Son of Man was a reference to the prophecy of Daniel 7:13–14, “In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.” Daniel saw glory, worship, and an everlasting kingdom given to the Messiah—here called the “Son of Man”—and Jesus applied this prophecy to Himself. Jesus also spoke of His coming kingdom on other occasions (Matthew 13:41; 16:28). The author of Hebrews used a reference to the “son of man” in the Psalms to teach that Jesus, the true Son of Man, will be the ruler of all things (Hebrews 2:5–9; cf. Psalm 8:4–6). The Son of Man, in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, will be the King.

Jesus was fully God (John 1:1), but He was also fully human (John 1:14). As the Son of God and the Son of Man, He is deserving of both titles.[[4]](#endnote-4)

1. What action did Jesus take to prove his authority as the Son of Man to forgive sins?
2. What happened to the paralytic?
3. Read John 10:31-39.

* To what evidence did Jesus point the Pharisees?
* How did this still show his love towards them?
* What was their response?
* Read John 15:18-21. How should we expect the world to respond to us?

1. Read Luke 5:27-32 along with Matthew 9:9-13 and Mark 2:14-17!
2. From the Matthew account explain the following phrases in your own words:
3. It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick (1 Corinthians 6:9-11)
4. ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice’ (Psalm 51:16-17)
5. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners (Isaiah 64:6; Romans 3:10-12)
6. Luke 5:28 says, “Levi (Matthew) got up, left everything and followed him.” Explain what Matthew did using Luke 9:57-62 and Matthew 10:38-39.
7. What has it cost you to follow Jesus?
8. Read Luke 5:33-39 along with Matthew 9:14-17 and Mark 2:18-22.
9. In these texts, Jesus offers two illustrations of the ‘new life’ available in Christ: garments and wineskins.

Explain how these illustrations point to the fact that the New Covenant   
(Jeremiah 31:31-34) is better than the Old Covenant (see article below).

1. Read Hebrews 9:15. Explain this verse in your own words.
2. Read 2 Corinthians 5:17.
3. Why did the Old Covenant fail?
4. What made the New Covenant work?
5. Have you experienced what it means to be a ‘new creation’ in Christ?   
   If not, what should you do?

**What is the Old Covenant?**

The Old Covenant was a conditional or bilateral agreement that God made with the Israelites. The Old Covenant was in effect during the dispensation of the Law. It is “old” in comparison to the New Covenant, promised by Jeremiah the prophet (Jeremiah 31:31, 33) and made effective by the death of the Lord Jesus (Luke 22:20). In the Old Covenant, the Israelites were required to obey God and keep the Law, and in return He protected and blessed them (Deuteronomy 30:15–18; 1 Samuel 12:14–15). In the New Covenant, things change, and God becomes the proactive and unconditional source of salvation and blessing. In the New Covenant, “God demonstrates   
his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8).

The author of Hebrews details some of the differences between the Old Covenant and the New. The Old Covenant required repeated, daily sacrifices of animals as a reminder of the people’s sin. But “it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins” (Hebrews 10:4). Under the New Covenant, “we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (verse 10), ending the need for animal sacrifices. “Where [sins and lawless acts] have been forgiven, sacrifice for sin is no longer necessary” (verse 18).

Under the Old Covenant, only the high priest could enter the Most Holy Place where God’s presence dwelt—and that only once a year. But under the New Covenant, Jesus is our High Priest (Hebrews 10:21), “we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus” (verse 19), and we can “draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full   
assurance that faith brings” (verse 22).

The Old Covenant was a set of “external regulations applying until the time of the new order” (Hebrews 9:10). Upon Jesus’ death and resurrection, the external regulations gave way to an internal change of heart (see Galatians 6:15). The Old Covenant was fulfilled in Christ   
(Matthew 5:17). “The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming—not the realities themselves” (Hebrews 10:1). “The reality . . . is found in Christ” (Colossians 2:17). The   
New Covenant involves a superior ministry (of Christ), is “established on better promises,”   
and is, in fact, “superior to the old [covenant]” (Hebrews 8:6).

Even while the Old Covenant stood, God had planned the New Covenant. The two work together to show people their need for God and then to fulfill that need. The Old Covenant required people to please God, but no one can measure up to perfection, and the Old Covenant resulted in a string of failures. “Through the law we become conscious of our sin” (Romans 3:20). The Old Covenant established our guilt before God and our need for a Savior. The Old Covenant was never intended to save us; in fact, “the old written covenant ends in death; but under the new covenant, the Spirit gives life” (2 Corinthians 3:6, NLT).  
  
In the Old Covenant, God also established that the way to atone for sin is through the shedding of blood (Hebrews 9:22). That is why during the Last Supper on the night of His arrest, Jesus passed the cup to the disciples and told them, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you” (Luke 22:20). When Jesus was crucified, His blood provided for the forgiveness of the sins of the whole world—the basis of the New Covenant. “By calling this covenant ‘new,’ he has made the first one obsolete” (Hebrews 8:13). Salvation is now a free gift for any who will believe in Christ and trust that His blood takes away their guilt before God (John 3:16–17).

One purpose of the Old Covenant was to make it absolutely clear that no man is righteous before God and that no one can save himself (Romans 3:10–11, 20). Before the New Covenant came, we were “held in custody under the law” (Galatians 3:23). God’s people were stuck in the Old Covenant, relying on a sacrificial system that looked forward to the coming of Christ and justification by faith (verse 24). “But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son . . . born under the law to redeem those under the law” (Galatians 4:4–5). When the Son of God   
died on the cross, God “canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross” (Colossians 2:14).

The ultimate purpose of the Old Covenant was to point people to Christ: “The law was our guardian until Christ came that we might be justified by faith. Now that this faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian” (Galatians 3:24–25). One truth that must not be missed is that   
*we are no longer under the Old Covenant*. Many false teachers today call on people to keep the Law, or at least part of it, as a means to please God. Christians must stand firm in the grace that God has given us and reject such legalism. “In Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith” (verse 26).[[5]](#endnote-5)

1. What is the most important truth you have learned from this lesson?

1. R. Kent Hughes, Luke: That You May Know the Truth (Wheaton: Crossway, 2015), 179. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Hughes, 180-181. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Kenneth Barker, General Editor, The NIV Study Bible (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1985), 1547. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. https://www.gotquestions.org/Jesus-Son-of-Man.html [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. https://www.gotquestions.org/old-covenant.html [↑](#endnote-ref-5)