

Jesusencounters

Bible Study Guide



First Baptist Church
Connection Groups
Fall 2016

Jesus Encounters: An Introduction

Jesus is the one Door to God—a great Door flung wide open to the heavenly Father’s heart. Jesus is our one Way to the Father (John 10:9; 14:6), and yet there are so many ways that Jesus comes to us. Luke the physician has some of the most thrilling and most exquisite “Jesus encounters” on record. So, this fall we will be returning to Luke’s Gospel (chapters 16-20) to enter together into a whole range of diverse and unique “Jesus encounters,” as Jesus makes his way to Jerusalem for his final and finest hour.

This is what I’m praying the Holy Spirit of God will do among us here at First Baptist this fall: that Jesus would encounter each one of us so clearly, so personally, so unmistakably that this city will start asking, “What is up at First Baptist? What is going on with those First Baptist people?” We do not want to be passive bystanders, only observing how Jesus encounters the wealthy and destitute, women and men, Jew and non-Jew, religious and non-religious, disciple and antagonist. We want Jesus to personally and uniquely encounter us too, both through our weekly study and through Sunday morning’s proclamation.

I hope you will join me in praying that some of us will, for the very first time, encounter the life-transforming power and presence of Jesus. Let’s also be praying that those of us who already follow Jesus will find our hearts re-fired by the Good News of God’s astonishing love in Jesus. Let’s pray that these stories would empower us to step back into our vocations each week, seeking both to encounter Jesus in the people whom God draws into our lives and to be the face of Jesus they can encounter in us.

This series focuses on the Jesus encounters that take place toward the final stretch of his journey to Jerusalem (Luke 16-20). I will, however, introduce this series on September 11 by returning to the beginning of Luke to examine the only recorded incident of Jesus’ childhood

(2:41-52). The twelve-year-old’s question to his parents, “Don’t you know that I must be about my Father’s work?” sets the direction for the whole Gospel. As we continue to read Luke’s story of Jesus (mostly following the lectionary texts) we will watch what it means for Jesus to be about his Father’s work. Jesus’ own unique vocation sets the course for each of our own vocations as his followers, who are also called into our heavenly Father’s work.

Notice how our series is bookended with big questions about who this young man Jesus is. In Luke 2:50-51, Jesus’ parents are wondering, and in our final text of the series, Luke 20:41-44, the crowds wonder at Jesus’ identity as he quotes the great messianic Psalm (Psalm 110:1).¹ Each of the encounters will give us an ever sharper—and often surprising—picture of who Jesus actually is, and what his (and his heavenly Father’s) character is like. Jesus has so many surprises in store, especially for us who think we know what God is like.

One final word on the nature of the Gospel of Luke itself: understanding the genre of Luke can help us to grasp the meaning of his stories about Jesus. What exactly does Luke think he is writing? He gives us a key indicator right up front in the formal introduction to his book (1:1-4), that he is writing in the style of an ancient *bios*—a biography of a famous person. The purpose of a *bios* was to focus on the “essence” of the great individual in order to commend this person’s example in life, character and teaching as one worthy of following (e.g., Plutarch, *Parallel Lives*, Philo, *On the Life of Moses*, Lucian, *Demonax*). These *bioi* were then used as instruction manuals for young men in the Greek and Roman *gymnasia* (academies), for the purpose of forming the ideal free, male Roman citizen. These *gymnasia*, then, were unapologetically elitist, sexist, and racist.

¹ Thanks to Yelena Pakhomova for this insight.

However, Luke's Gospel subverts this genre by its particular attention on the disenfranchised, women as well as men, slave as well as free, poor as well as wealthy, and especially all those whom society tends to hold out at the margins. This *bios*, this Gospel biography, is not just meant for the instruction of some wealthy young men studying in some elite school. This Gospel is for everyone—even for us here in Vancouver in 2016!²

So, as we reinvestigate these ancient stories of Jesus, let's keep asking ourselves: How does Jesus make sense of our own stories? What does evangelism and discipleship look like, Jesus' way? What could it look like for First Baptist Church, and for the people of our neighbourhood—for Vancouverites—to encounter Jesus afresh today? How can these stories of "Jesus encounters" form and inform our own Christ-centered relationships, particularly in our Connection Groups? In what ways do these "Jesus encounters" guide our Alpha ministry, our encounters with our neighbours in Tuesday evening's shelter, in our intergenerational connections, in our "Heart for the City" building project, and in every aspect of our life together as a community here in the heart of Vancouver, following Jesus with God's heart for this city and beyond?

Jesus' prayer begins: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name." May this be our prayer too: "Jesus, let your name—your character, your reputation—look so very good to our neighbours. As we pay attention to Luke's beautiful portrait of you this fall, may our own hearts and minds be so fired up with your love that we too will allow you and your Father to look really good here in Vancouver. Amen."

Tim Kuepfer
Senior Minister

² Mikeal C. Parsons, *Luke* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2015), Paideia, 18.

How to use this study guide

This fall we are inviting you to explore an inductive approach to a group Bible study. Looking at Scripture inductively requires: carefully paying attention to what the text says (observation), understanding the author's message to the original audience (interpretation), and seeking personal transformation by the truth of the Word (application).

The printed passages provide space for you to mark your observations directly on the text, write down your own questions and thoughts, and take notes during the group discussion.

When observing the text, mark the following:¹

| | |
|---|---|
| The Setting or Context | Who? Where? When? |
| The Event or Idea | What? How? Why? |
| The Result or Consequence | So? |
| Word relationships | Repetitions, similarities, contrasts, cause to effect, general to particular, progression, climax, etc. |
| Logical Connections | But, therefore, so that, because, for, if...then |
| Units of thought | Changes in location, time, theme, characters, thought, or actions (structure of the text) |
| Old Testament Quotes or Allusions | |

The discussion questions are there to help you with discovering the main message of the text and with application. Some of the studies will begin with a reflection or a “warm-up” question related to the passage and our life.

¹ *United in the Great Story*, Scripture engagement at Lausanne Younger Leaders Gathering, 2016

To get the most out of your time together as a group, it would be helpful for the group facilitators to look at the passage, questions and the notes at the back of the study guide prior to the meeting. Group facilitators, feel free to modify or change the questions as you see fit. It is only a tool. You know better what will be helpful for your particular group of people in this particular time. If sharing a meal or having a prolonged time of prayer together feels like the right thing to do, then put the study aside and shape your time together in ways the Holy Spirit prompts you to.

At the end of each study there will be either a question or a suggestion to help the group engage Scripture in a personal way. Feel free to utilize those as you see fit. You can pray together as a group in response to what God has spoken, or spend time reflecting and praying quietly on your own, or take a few minutes to journal and listen to what God has to say.

My hope is that when our groups gather to look at Jesus encounters this fall, we will not only see more of God, we will get to know each other deeply. I pray that our time in Scripture will be rich, and our conversations and fellowship will be real.

Yelena Pakhomova
Connection Groups Coordinator

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⁴¹Every year Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem for the Festival of the Passover. ⁴²When he was twelve years old, they went up to the festival, according to the custom. ⁴³After the festival was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it. ⁴⁴Thinking he was in their company, they traveled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends. ⁴⁵When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him. ⁴⁶After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers. ⁴⁸When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you."

⁴⁹"Why were you searching for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?" ⁵⁰But they did not understand what he was saying to them.

⁵¹Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart. ⁵²And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.

Luke 2:41-52

Observation

Have someone read the text out loud. Then spend a few minutes looking over it on your own, take note of how the text is structured, what geographical and temporal references are used, notice what repetitions Luke uses, how he is communicating emotions. Share your findings.

Interpretation

1. What is the Festival of the Passover? (See Exodus 23, Deuteronomy 16 for context). What does it tell us about Jesus' parents that they went to Jerusalem every year to celebrate it?
2. What do you think is the significance of Luke's mentioning Jesus's age?
3. What is Mary and Joseph's search strategy? Where do they look for Jesus, and why is it a surprise for them to find him in the temple?
4. It seems that throughout the story Jesus's parents were unaware of his intention to stay behind, of his exact location and of his sense of purpose. Look closely at Jesus's interaction with Mary, what surprises you in their exchange of questions? Why would Jesus say that the temple was a logical place for him to be?
5. What do you think Luke wants us to learn about Jesus through this childhood episode of his life?

Application & Prayer

Mary and Joseph encountered Jesus in a new way the day they found Him in the temple. They could not immediately find Him in places where they thought He would be only to find Him where He knew He had to be. Jesus gave his parents a larger picture of His identity and of heavenly reality, without, however, denying the earthly reality of His life.

Pray and ask God to help you encounter Jesus anew this week and for the knowledge of where to find Him. Ask God to show you what His business is in our midst and throughout the whole world. Is there anything He's doing that He wants you to be involved in?

¹ Jesus told his disciples: “There was a rich man whose manager was accused of wasting his possessions. ²So he called him in and asked him, ‘What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your management, because you cannot be manager any longer.’” ³“The manager said to himself, ‘What shall I do now? My master is taking away my job. I’m not strong enough to dig, and I’m ashamed to beg— ⁴I know what I’ll do so that, when I lose my job here, people will welcome me into their houses.’” ⁵“So he called in each one of his master’s debtors. He asked the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’” ⁶“‘Nine hundred gallons of olive oil,’ he replied. “The manager told him, ‘Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it four hundred and fifty.’” ⁷“Then he asked the second, ‘And how much do you owe?’” “‘A thousand bushels of wheat,’ he replied. “He told him, ‘Take your bill and make it eight hundred.’” ⁸“The master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly. For the people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light. ⁹I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings. ¹⁰“Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. ¹¹So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? ¹²And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else’s property, who will give you property of your own? ¹³“No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.” ¹⁴ The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all this and were sneering at Jesus. ¹⁵ He said to them, “You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of others, but God knows your hearts. What people value highly is detestable in God’s sight.

Luke 16:1-15

Observation

The parable about the dishonest or shrewd manager does not lend itself to easy interpretations. Scholars and commentators look at it from various perspectives and come to conclusions that are not different, but yet diverse. Enjoy looking at it together with your group and see what the Lord has to say to you.

Spend 5-10 minutes reading Luke 16:1-15 on your own, observing how the text is structured, what repetitions, contrasts, logical connections are used. Share your findings.

Interpretation

Focus first on the parable in Luke 16:1-8.

1. For whose ears is the parable intended, can you specify the audience from what precedes and follows it?
2. What details in the text reveal the extent of the manager's authority and responsibilities?
3. What crisis does the manager face, being aware that in villages and farming communities the news spread quickly? Consider his monologue in search for an exit strategy, what solution does he opt for, what drives it?
4. How was the massive reduction of debts supposed to help him in that culture?
5. Why do you think the master finds the manager's shrewdness commendable? What does it mean that the people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light?

Focus on Luke 16:9-15.

6. What is the connection between the parable and what Jesus says right after? How does it concern the Pharisees?
7. Why does Jesus see money as master in v.13? How are the two masters (God/money) different?
8. How does serving Mammon compete with serving God in our lives today?

Application & Prayer

What would help you personally to keep your eyes on the true Master? Consider if there is a better way to serve with what has been given to you. Pray together in response to what you have heard from God in the Word today and as the Spirit leads.

¹⁹ “There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. ²⁰ At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores ²¹ and longing to eat what fell from the rich man’s table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. ²² “The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³ In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. ²⁴ So he called to him, ‘Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.’ ²⁵ “But Abraham replied, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. ²⁶ And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.’ ²⁷ “He answered, ‘Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, ²⁸ for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.’ ²⁹ “Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.’ ³⁰ “‘No, father Abraham,’ he said, ‘but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.’ ³¹ “He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’”

Luke 16:19-31

Observation

Talking about this passage, R.T. France reminds us “this is a parable and is not necessarily intended to describe the specifics of the afterlife.” (Luke, p.270)

Read the passage and divide it into sections that seem to reflect the structure of the parable. Make careful observations of the text, marking:

- anything that stands out to you or things you find surprising (e.g. angels are mentioned)
- repetitions (e.g. the rich man calls Abraham “father” 3 times)
- contrasts (e.g. rich man – beggar)
- similarities or parallel constructions (e.g. “send Lazarus” to me, “send Lazarus to my family”)
- “cause and effect” (e.g. “if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent”)
- other connections (e.g. rich man calls Abraham “father”; Abraham calls him “son”.)

Share your findings.

Interpretation

1. What details in 16:19-22 intensify the contrast between the rich man and Lazarus? What do you think is the significance of Lazarus being named and the rich man remaining unnamed?
2. What details in 16:23-26 underscore the reversal of fate of the two men?
3. What is the significance of Abraham’s presence in the parable and him being addressed as “father” by the rich man?
4. What are the indications in the text that the rich man and his family knew who Lazarus was in his lifetime?
5. What are the three requests that the rich man makes? And what do they reveal about the condition of his heart and his attitude towards Lazarus?
6. Why does Abraham point to Moses and the Prophets as the voice to listen to in order to repent? Why do you think the rich man does not see it as sufficient?
7. What do the three responses of Abraham tell the audience (primarily the Pharisees, “lovers of money”, see Lk. 16:14) about the impact that the earthly life has on one’s eternal destiny?

Application & Prayer

While the prodigal son squandered his father’s wealth and the dishonest manager wasted his master’s wealth, the rich man has squandered his own wealth. His irresponsible use of resources is not disconnected from him ignoring the voice of God.

Pray in response to the Word. You might want to ask the Lord to gently show you if there’s an area of your life where you are not listening to His voice and not trusting His claims on what He’s given you. Or you might ask Him to show you who are the Lazaruses in our midst and in the city that remain unnoticed in their suffering. May He guide us in how we steward what is His.

Luke 17:1-10 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁷ Jesus said to his disciples: “Things that cause people to stumble are bound to come, but woe to anyone through whom they come. ²It would be better for them to be thrown into the sea with a millstone tied around their neck than to cause one of these little ones to stumble. ³So watch yourselves.

“If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them. ⁴Even if they sin against you seven times in a day and seven times come back to you saying ‘I repent,’ you must forgive them.”

⁵The apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith!”

⁶He replied, “If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be uprooted and planted in the sea,’ and it will obey you.

⁷“Suppose one of you has a servant plowing or looking after the sheep. Will he say to the servant when he comes in from the field, ‘Come along now and sit down to eat’? ⁸Won’t he rather say, ‘Prepare my supper, get yourself ready and wait on me while I eat and drink; after that you may eat and drink’? ⁹Will he thank the servant because he did what he was told to do? ¹⁰So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, ‘We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.’”

Luke 17:1-10

Observation

Before looking at today's scripture, in your group share about some people, in the Bible or in your own life, who are examples of great faith for you. What about their life of discipleship has impacted you?

Have someone read Luke 17:1-10. Spend 5 minutes looking closely at the text, identifying its structure, the audience, and paying attention to the commands of Jesus.

Interpretation

1. What things could potentially cause or be a conduit for stumbling in somebody's discipleship, both within and outside of Christian community?
2. Who are "the little ones" Jesus has in mind and why causing them to stumble is such a grave offence?
3. Why is forgiveness a must in the community of believers? If repentance is a prerequisite for forgiveness, what do we do with someone who is unrepentant?
4. Why do you think the apostles ask Jesus to give them more faith?
5. How does the analogy of a mustard seed and a mulberry tree respond to their request?
6. How does the story where Jesus first invites the apostles to see themselves as slave-owners and then as slaves speaks into their request?
7. How does this text address the connection between faith and obedience, if it does it at all?

Application & Prayer

Reflect on your own walk with Jesus. Have you ever been in a place where together with the apostles you wanted Jesus to increase your faith? Are there places in your life where Jesus is encouraging you to increased obedience?

Lord Jesus, show us what our duty is in our family, Christian community, city.

Lord, where do you want to find us faithful?

Luke 17:11-19 New International Version (NIV)

¹¹Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee.

¹²As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance

¹³and called out in a loud voice, “Jesus, Master, have pity on us!”

¹⁴When he saw them, he said, “Go, show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went, they were cleansed.

¹⁵One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. ¹⁶He threw himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan.

¹⁷Jesus asked, “Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? ¹⁸Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?” ¹⁹Then he said to him, “Rise and go; your faith has made you well.”

Luke 17:11-19

Observation

Thanksgiving is often referred to as a spiritual discipline. Would you agree?

Share with your group what you are thankful for at the moment, or for what God's been doing in your life in the past few weeks or months.

Read Luke 17:11-19

Spend 5 min observing the text on your own. Mark any repetitions, contrasts, cause and effect clauses, anything that you find striking or unusual. Briefly share your findings with the group.

Interpretation

1. What is the significance of mentioning the location where the miracle took place?
2. Why do you think Luke does not reveal the ethnic make up of the group of lepers right away? What features in the story apply similarly to all ten men, and what set them apart?
3. Why did Jesus send them to show themselves to the priests?
4. What indications in the text show that all ten had some kind of faith?
5. Why did one of the lepers come back?
6. What is the connection between the Samaritan's praising God and throwing himself at the feet of Jesus? What is his praise and thanksgiving reflective of?
7. The term Jesus uses to refer to the grateful Samaritan, "foreigner", is not used anywhere else in the New Testament. However, it was exactly the word used on the temple inscription that prohibited foreigners to enter the Jerusalem temple. In what way was the faith of the Samaritan a saving faith? How was it different compared to the other nine's? And why would it be an unexpected turn of events for Luke's audience?

Application & Prayer

Ten lepers had an encounter with Jesus, "Master", but only one had truly encountered Jesus, was made whole, and was saved in all the ways he needed saving.

Share and pray in response to how the Lord has spoken to you today in His Word. Or use Psalm 100 to end your time together in Scripture today. We are the Lord's, what more can we be thankful for!

Luke 18:15-17 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁵ People were also bringing babies to Jesus for him to place his hands on them. When the disciples saw this, they rebuked them. ¹⁶ But Jesus called the children to him and said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ¹⁷ Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.”

Luke 18:15-17

Observation

Jewish society in the time of Jesus was a socially graded society. The successful and the affluent were at the top, while those with no voice, status or means were at the bottom. Children were one of those socially vulnerable groups. It was also assumed that wealth and social standing were the signs of God's blessing and a mark of a life lived according to God's standards.

Have someone read Luke 18:15-17. Spend a few minutes making observations, noticing the details and the big idea. Imagine yourself being in the crowd, waiting for your turn to see Jesus together with other people, and parents with babies. What do you see, feel, and hear? Look also at what precedes this passage and what follows it. Think how this passage fits into the context, how the context helps us understand what Jesus wants us to see. Share your findings.

Interpretation

1. Why were people bringing babies to Jesus asking him to touch them (Greek says "even infants")?
2. Why would the disciples react negatively to that fact and rebuke the parents?
3. How do you think Jesus' response speaks to the disciples? To the parents of the children? To the wider culture of that time?
4. What truth about the kingdom of God is revealed by Jesus' words and actions?
5. Who are "such as these"?
6. What does it mean to receive the kingdom of God like a little child? And why is that a requirement for entry?

Application & Prayer

By way of application, you could share how the Lord spoke to you through this passage.

Or reflect on the unexpected encounter with Jesus that the disciples and the crowd just had: whom would Jesus use today as an example of this kind of vulnerability and dependency? Are we together with the disciples hindering children and those who are considered vulnerable from coming to Jesus? If so, how is He inviting us to change?

Pray as the group feels led or use the prayer below.

Dear Lord,

Give us the eyes to see what Your Kingdom is about. Give us Your heart for those who are vulnerable and who do not feel like they are worthy to come to You. Give us Your compassion. We lift up to You the poor and the marginalized.

Lord, we lift up the children who have seen war, hunger, death, abuse and neglect. We lift up children who are suffering from loss, orphans, those who have no access to education or housing, struggling with malnutrition and disease.

Lord, You know every story of brokenness and pain. We believe that one day You will wipe every tear away and will make things right through Your Son, Jesus Christ, and You are already doing it.

Until that day, let us remember that we have received mercy, and let us be tireless in showing mercy, making Your love known, and doing what is right unto the least of these. Receive us all into Your Kingdom, Lord. Amen.

¹⁸ A certain ruler asked him, “Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” ¹⁹ “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good—except God alone. ²⁰ You know the commandments: ‘You shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, honor your father and mother.’” ²¹ “All these I have kept since I was a boy,” he said.

²² When Jesus heard this, he said to him, “You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”

²³ When he heard this, he became very sad, because he was very wealthy. ²⁴ Jesus looked at him and said, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵ Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.”

²⁶ Those who heard this asked, “Who then can be saved?”

²⁷ Jesus replied, “What is impossible with man is possible with God.”

²⁸ Peter said to him, “We have left all we had to follow you!”

²⁹ “Truly I tell you,” Jesus said to them, “no one who has left home or wife or brothers or sisters or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God ³⁰ will fail to receive many times as much in this age, and in the age to come eternal life.”

Luke 18:18-30

Observation

Right after encountering those at the bottom of society, Jesus encounters someone who is at the top, a ruler interested in obtaining eternal life. It was assumed that wealth and social standing were the signs of God's blessing and a mark of a life lived according to God's standards.

French philosopher and theologian Jacques Ellul wrote: "When we make a claim to use money, we make a gross error. We can, if we must use money, but it is really money that uses us and makes us servants by bringing us under its law and subordinating us to its aims." He believed that money was a spiritual power, one of the modern person's "holy things" and that money questions were not part of the moral order, but of the spiritual. (France, 265)

Would you agree with that?

Invite one person in your group to read Luke 18:18-30 aloud. Take 5-10 minutes to look at the text on your own. Divide the text into units of thought, mark any significant repetitions, cause and effect clauses, transitions, emotions, the audience, Old Testament allusions, etc. (for instance, the passage is bookended with "eternal life" sentences). Share the most relevant observations.

Interpretation

1. "Rabbi" was a common way to refer to a religious teacher. Why do you think Jesus makes a theological statement about the goodness of God before answering the ruler's question?
2. Consider the dialogue and the three things that Jesus says to the ruler.
 - a. Why do you think Jesus refers to the Ten Commandments? Are there any commandments that the ruler is not living by?
 - b. In v.22, Jesus identifies the problem. What stands in the way of the ruler's salvation? How would the three-fold instruction of "sell...give...follow" solve the problem? What Jesus asks of a rich ruler is shocking. Why would Jesus make such a radical demand? Was the man willing to follow through?
 - c. Jesus uses a metaphor of a camel going through the eye of a needle to emphasize the impossibility for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God. Why do you think wealth and possessions have such a pull on people even to outweigh eternal life?
4. What does the question of the people witnessing the situation, "Who then can be saved?" reveal about their assumptions and concerns regarding salvation?
5. What is the nature of salvation according to Jesus? How does He speak to people's concerns and assumptions as to who can be saved?
6. What do we learn about the character of sacrifice for the sake of the kingdom and about God's provision in Jesus' response to Peter? How is this interaction between Jesus and Peter related to the conversation Jesus had with the rich ruler?

Application & Prayer

The demands of discipleship are no less radical today, and the complexities of socio-economic structure and lifestyle expectations are no less pressing. Where do you find it the most difficult to follow Jesus?

Ask Jesus to give you strength to follow Him with complete trust in His goodness and care.

Luke 19:1-10 New International Version (NIV)

¹Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. ²A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. ³He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. ⁴So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.

⁵When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.” ⁶So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.

⁷All the people saw this and began to mutter, “He has gone to be the guest of a sinner.”

⁸But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.”

⁹Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. ¹⁰For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

Luke 19:1-10

Observation

This story, similarly to the story of the rich ruler, is a quest story. However, this time the outcome is different. Jesus makes an unexpected stop on his way to Jerusalem.

Read Luke 19:1-10 carefully paying attention to details. Note how Zacchaeus is described through the eyes of the crowd and how Jesus sees him. Divide the text into logical units. Can you spot a chiasmic structure? (*Chiasm* is a repetition of similar or related ideas in a reversed order with the main thought “sandwiched” in between, e.g.). What do you find striking? What puzzles you? Briefly share your findings with the group.

Interpretation

1. What details does Luke use to help us see the tension that existed between Zacchaeus and his community?
2. Why do you think Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus so badly that he unbecomingly ran ahead and climbed up a tree? How does this act shed light on Zacchaeus’ inner tension?
3. Why is there a sense of necessity and immediacy about Jesus’ decision to stay at Zacchaeus’ house?
4. Why do you think the mood of the crowd changes in response to Jesus’s act of generosity and grace? Who is the receiver of the crowd’s negativity now?
5. What happens at the banquet in Zacchaeus’ house? What are his pronouncements indicative of?
6. What would be the impact of Zacchaeus’ encounter with Jesus on the community?
7. Whose quest story is this? How do you understand and react to the words of Jesus in vv. 9-10?

Application & Prayer

In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, the rich man claims the status of a son of Abraham while refusing to live as one. In the story of Zacchaeus, Jesus reclaims Zacchaeus’ identity from the chief collaborator and the oppressor to “a son of Abraham”. Zacchaeus’ transformation begins with his commitment to right the wrongs he inflicted on the community. The rich ruler turns away from the offer of salvation regarding it to be too costly. Zacchaeus embraces the Saviour and the cost of salvation.

Spend some time in prayer, responding to how the Word of God spoke to you. Ask Jesus to keep extending his grace to those who seek Him and to keep bringing healing to our communities.

²⁷ Some of the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Jesus with a question.

²⁸ “Teacher,” they said, “Moses wrote for us that if a man’s brother dies and leaves a wife but no children, the man must marry the widow and raise up offspring for his brother. ²⁹ Now there were seven brothers. The first one married a woman and died childless. ³⁰ The second ³¹ and then the third married her, and in the same way the seven died, leaving no children. ³² Finally, the woman died too. ³³ Now then, at the resurrection whose wife will she be, since the seven were married to her?”

³⁴ Jesus replied, “The people of this age marry and are given in marriage. ³⁵ But those who are considered worthy of taking part in the age to come and in the resurrection from the dead will neither marry nor be given in marriage, ³⁶ and they can no longer die; for they are like the angels. They are God’s children, since they are children of the resurrection. ³⁷ But in the account of the burning bush, even Moses showed that the dead rise, for he calls the Lord ‘the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’ ³⁸ He is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for to him all are alive.”

Luke 20:27-38

Observation

This encounter of Jesus with the Sadducees allows us to stop and think of matters that often do not get much attention. When you think of the resurrection and life after death what comes to mind? What has contributed to what you believe about it and what you hope for?

Read Luke 20:27-38 together and spend a few minutes on your own observing how the passage is structured, if there are any meaningful connections, repetitions, contrasts or cause and effect clauses that Luke uses to communicate the message. Is there anything that stands out to you or anything you find surprising? Share your findings with your group.

Interpretation

1. What is the purpose of the Sadducees' question? What does it reveal about their attitude toward life after death? What does it say about how they pictured it?
2. Why would Moses give such a requirement? Deuteronomy 25:5-10, Genesis 38:8-9 shed some light on the practice of levirate marriage in Israel.
3. What does Jesus say about human existence after death and marriage?
4. How does He address the underlying assumptions of the Sadducees by referring to their own authoritative teacher?
5. What can we glean about resurrection from this passage? What does it mean to be the child of the resurrection?
6. How does Jesus affirm God's covenantal commitment to his people in vv. 37-38?
7. How does this encounter with Jesus expand and reframe the Sadducees vision of humanity and God? How can it speak into contemporary scepticism?

Application & Prayer

The question of the resurrection was not just a matter of a theological debate for Jesus, who was going to face death shortly after this interaction.

Is there anything you have heard from the Lord today? What would you like to continue thinking about? What does it mean to you that our God is the God of the living? Pray for each other and in response to the Scripture.

²⁰ Keeping a close watch on him, they sent spies, who pretended to be sincere. They hoped to catch Jesus in something he said, so that they might hand him over to the power and authority of the governor. ²¹ So the spies questioned him: “Teacher, we know that you speak and teach what is right, and that you do not show partiality but teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. ²² Is it right for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?”

²³ He saw through their duplicity and said to them, ²⁴ “Show me a denarius. Whose image and inscription are on it?”

“Caesar’s,” they replied.

²⁵ He said to them, “Then give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s.”

²⁶ They were unable to trap him in what he had said there in public. And astonished by his answer, they became silent.

Luke 20:20-26

Observation

Read Luke 20:20-26 paying attention to details, notice any contrasts or comparisons, changes in the mood.

Interpretation

1. Where does the action take place? Who is present and what is going on, who are “they” and why do they resort to sending spies? If you were part of the crowd listening to Jesus teach, how would you describe a “spy” that could be standing next to you?
2. Although starting with flattery in an attempt to catch Jesus of guard, the spies inadvertently give an honest characteristic to Jesus’ teaching. But why could the question on taxation potentially trap Jesus?
3. What ramifications would Jesus face had He responded positively? Negatively?
4. What do images and wording on money communicate today? What would the image and the inscription on a denarius communicate to people living in the Roman Empire and using denarii in their everyday life?
5. How do you understand Jesus’ response to give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s? What is God’s? What bears His image? Why does Jesus say “give back” and not just “give”?
6. How did Jesus’ response speak into the sensitive political situation then? In what way did He reframe the question?
7. How do you think this conversation relates to our life today? What issues does it address?

Application & Prayer

Pray together as you feel led in response to the Word, or for those countries and Christians where the governments do not recognize or allow the practice of Christian faith, where sensitive political and religious situation is a reality for many believers.

Luke 20:41-44 New International Version (NIV)

⁴¹Then Jesus said to them, “Why is it said that the Messiah is the son of David? ⁴²David himself declares in the Book of Psalms:

“The Lord said to my Lord:

“Sit at my right hand ⁴³

until I make your enemies

a footstool for your feet.”

⁴⁴David calls him ‘Lord.’ How then can he be his son?”

Luke 20:41-44

Observation

Having responded to the questions of his opponents, Jesus in turn poses a question to them.

Read Luke 20:41-44. To grasp the context, have a look at what precedes and follows the passage, as well as at the vision David paints in Psalm 110. Matthew gives a similar account of the event, but also includes how the conversation ends (Mt. 22:41-46).

Interpretation

1. What is the point of Jesus' question? Are there any inconsistencies that He is uncovering in the beliefs of the religious authorities of the day?
2. How does Jesus' question relate to Himself and to the conflict with the religious and political leaders?
3. Is there any significance in Jesus quoting this particular part of Psalm 110?
4. Why was the Messiah expected to be a descendant of king David? What were some other expectations around the person of the Messiah and his rule?
5. Based on the stories we have looked at this fall, how does Jesus fit these expectations, and in what ways does He exceed or reframe them?
6. How does this question connect with the very first encounter we looked at: Jesus being about His Father's business in Luke 2:49? How does it address the question of authority that the chief priests and the teachers of the law pose in Luke 20:2?

Application & Prayer

What expectations or assumptions about God is Jesus inviting you to reconsider? Are you letting Him be the Lord of your life on His own terms?

As we finish the Jesus encounters series, share with your group what stood out to you the most in the stories we have looked at as a group and on Sunday mornings. Was there a Jesus encounter that personally resonated with you? Where did you hear God? Where did you meet Jesus?

Pray together.

Some notes on historical and cultural background:

Luke 2:40 - 52

"The porticos at the perimeter of the court of Gentiles were shaded locations where Jewish teachers could conduct their classes. Education involved dialogue between teachers and students where both parties asked questions and offered answers." (R.T. France, *Luke*, Baker Books, 2013, 45)

"In that society... 'parents socialize their children to be absolutely loyal to their biological kin group, since every member of the family shares the family honor and one member's misbehavior shames the entire group.' Family honor was especially threatened by lack of respect for parents." (Robert C. Tannehill, "Luke" 1996, Abingdon Press, Nashville, 76)

J.C. Ryle on Jesus being 12 years old: "This age appears to have been thought of by the Jews as a kind of turning point away from the state of childhood." (J.C. Ryle, *Luke*, Eds. A. McGrath and J. I. Packer, Crossway Books, Wheaton: Illinois, 1997, 46)

"It is quite possible that there is a double-meaning, for the same expression ["in my Father's house" in Greek] may refer to someone's 'affairs' or business. Then Jesus is not only indicating where he can be found, but why. He already feels the calling to be engaged in his Father's business." (Tannehill, 76.)

Luke 16:1-15

"Begging and manual labor were the steps immediately above slavery in the social scale." (John Nolland, *Luke*, Word Biblical Commentary, Dallas Texas, 1993, 798)

"His declared goal is to be received into someone else's house. This phrase is an idiom that appears in the works of Epictetus, a first-century Greek-Stoic philosopher, and means to get another job." (K. Bailey, *Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes*, 337)

"The quantities involved are quite huge. The oil involved would represent the annual yield of a very large olive grove. Similarly the wheat debt 'would represent a half-share rent for almost 200 acres...' The master is dealing with large-scale business associates here, not with ordinary people and ordinary economic levels." (Nolland, 799)

"Since oil was cheaper than wheat, the reductions in the debts were about the same" (New Bible Commentary, 1006)

"The validity of a contract is guaranteed by being written in the handwriting of the debtor, with the documents in the possession of the creditor (or here his steward)." (Nolland, 799)

"The ancient world ran on the basis of a reciprocity ethic: good turns given and returned. The steward's move gave him a claim upon his master's debtors that was much more secure than any contract. Public honor required that they make some appropriate return to their benefactor." (Nolland, 803)

"The manager may have known that honor was more important to his master than wealth. In this respect, the master would be typical of his time and place... 'Money, goods, and any sort of wealth are really means to an honorable name, and any other use of wealth is considered foolish.'" (Tannehill, 247)

"He [the master] is a generous man, because he dismissed the steward, but did not jail him. Furthermore, he could have sold the steward and his family as slaves to recoup his losses, yet he did not. In the light of the extraordinary grace that he had just received, the steward decides to risk everything on one roll of the dice. He builds his ruse on the basis of his unshakeable awareness of the generous nature of his master." (Bailey, 340)

Luke 16:19-31

"Living in luxury" has the meaning of "feasting sumptuously" (Bailey, 382)

"Lazarus is the only individual with a name in all Jesus' parables... The name *Lazarus* is a Hebrew word that means 'the one whom God helps.'" (Bailey, 383)

"The community around Lazarus respected and cared for him as best it could. The only man in town with the resources necessary to meet his medical needs was the rich man, so the members of the community carried him to the rich man's gate each day in the hope that the rich man or his guests would feel some compassion and give Lazarus something. The practice is common in the East." (Bailey, 385)

16:21 The Greek says, “*But also the dogs...*” This is not an escalation of his suffering, but a welcome (and therapeutic relief). Dogs, unclean as they were in Jewish eyes, did their best for this beggar, whom the respectable company refused to help. (R.T. France, 268)

16:29 “‘They have Moses and the prophets, let them listen to them’ – A Jew had no excuse for ignorance of the way of salvation. Being the ‘people of the book,’ they knew of God’s bias toward the poor, to which both law and prophets give frequent expression. The permanent value of the Old Testament, just asserted in 16:17, is thus reinforced.” (France, 269)

16:29 “To hear” in Semitic languages means “to listen and obey” (K. Bailey, 393)

“In contemporary America, the chasm between the wealthy and those in poverty is greater than it has ever been since the period just before the Great Depression. The wealthiest 1% of Americans control 40% of the wealth and the middle 80% has only 7% of the wealth. The lowest quintile barely registers on the scales. Both the rich man and Lazarus are alive and well (or not so well) in the contemporary American economic landscape.” (“Wealth Inequality in America” is a YouTube video that summarizes the research of Harvard business professor Michael Norton and Duke psychology professor Dan Ariely. (Mikeal C. Parsons, *Luke*, Baker Academic, Grand Rapids, MI, 2015, 254)

Luke 17:1-10

Some take this section of the Gospel of Luke as Jesus’s three separate instructions on the life of discipleship; others see it as one coherent whole. We invite you to consider this text as one unit.

“Things that cause people to stumble”: *skandalon* - stumbling block or trap - something that causes spiritual failure, whether temporary or complete (R. T. France, 272)

Being thrown into the sea with a millstone around one’s neck “would bring certain death since millstones were quite heavy, needing donkeys to turn them.” (France, 273)

“*If your brother or sister sins against you...*” the context indicates that the ‘brother or sister’ is not just an actual family member, but more generally a fellow disciple...The ‘rebuke’ is in context not a self-righteous condemnation but rather a realistic pointing out the offense with a view to reconciliation. Once the rebuke has been effective in producing repentance, forgiveness is not an option but a duty.” (France, 273)

“In the ancient world slavery was an available image for the total commitment of loyalty, devotion and obedience due to God.” (Nolland, 843)

“In that context, the expression of thankfulness by the master to the slave was understood as placing the master in debt to the slave. The refusal of a master to say thank you to the servant was not interpreted as rude.” (The Expositor’s Bible Commentary, *Luke-Acts*, Eds. T. Longman III & D. E. Garland, 268)

Luke 17:11-19

Lev 13:46, lepers were thought as outcasts and were not allowed to live with other people.

Lev 13-14, Deut 24:8 “The priests were appointed by God to judge all leprosy cases and to decide whether the leper was clean or unclean, cured or uncured.” (Ryle, 223)

“Leprosy was a skin disease (not to be confused with modern Hansen’s disease), the symptoms of which are described in detail in Lev 13.” (Parsons, 257)

“These lepers are the only non-disciples to refer to Jesus as ‘Master.’” (Parsons, 257)

The distance of the lepers reflects Lev 13:46, Num 5:2-3 (Nolland, 846)

“In the overall scheme of Luke-Acts, the self-righteous in Israel reject the gospel, while outsiders receive it – sinners, tax-collectors, and, eventually, Gentiles...Luke’s Gospel is quintessentially the “gospel for the outsider.” R. T. France, 276.

Galilee: In Roman times, Palestine was divided into three provinces: Judea, Samaria and Galilee. Jews comprised the majority of the Galilean population; they were thought to be pious and loyal to the Torah. Galilee was densely populated and quite rich, but the wealth distribution was not even; the majority was lower class.

Although most Jesus' miracles were done in Galilee, there was a lot of resistance to conversion.

Samaria: Samaria occupied the territory of what had been the Northern Kingdom of Israel; it was racially mixed including people of Jewish and pagan ancestry. Samaritans only accepted the first five books of the Bible; they worshiped on Mount Gerizim instead of Mount Zion in Jerusalem. The Jews looked down upon the Samaritans because of their pagan ancestry and not adhering to proper Judaism. A Jew travelling from Judea to Galilee or back would bypass Samaria in order not to contaminate themselves by crossing through Samaria.

Luke 18:15-17

"In ancient times the act of touching often symbolized inclusion and acceptance." (Longman III & Garland, 279)

"In the first century, Jewish households were patriarchal - men came first, followed by women and children. Adult men were the key members of society, women were secondary, and children were to be seen but not heard. It was customary, however, for parents to bring their children (the Greek word for "children" is *paideia*, meaning children ranging in age from babies to preteens) to an elder or a scribe so he could touch (or lay hands on) and bless them. His was often done on the Eve of the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur). (Bruce B. Barton, *Luke*, Life application Bible commentary, Tyndale House Publishing, 1997, 415)

"It is unlikely that the infants are highlighted because of appealing qualities that might have (e.g. their innocence or openness, views that probably reflect modern sentimentality). Rather they are introduced because of their lowly status. They are powerless and have no right to claim attention in the public dominated by adult males. This is demonstrated by the disciples' negative reaction to their presence." (Tannehill, 267)

"The ancient world did not have a romantic notion of children's innocent, creative, playful, or spontaneous. In the Greco-Roman world in general children were viewed as lowly and without social status. Unwanted infants were sometimes "exposed" - literally thrown away. Others were raised as prostitutes or as gladiators. Some were even disfigured to enhance their value as beggars." (Parsons, 268)

"The one who becomes totally dependent on God's grace in order to enter the kingdom of God finds that kingdom populated by those marginalized and rendered vulnerable in this life." (France, 268)

Luke 18:18-30

Jewish society in the time of Jesus was a socially graded society. The successful and the rich were at the top, while those with no voice, status or means were at the bottom. It was also assumed that wealth and social standing were the signs of God's blessing and a mark of a life lived according to God's standards.

"What is clear is that Jesus's purpose in this question is to establish a standard of goodness infinitely higher than the ruler supposes it to be." (T. Longman III & D. E. Garland, 280)

"The ruler has broken the first commandment by breaking the last." (T. Longman III & D. E. Garland, 281)

"Our Lord prescribed according to the disease before him. This was a case of desperate and idolatrous love of money. There was only one remedy: "Sell all, and distribute it." (Ryle, 236)

"The command 'come, follow me' means to become a disciple. (T. Longman III & D. E. Garland, 281)

The imagery of a camel and the needle conveys the idea of impossibility.

"The camel was the largest animal the Jews were used to, and a camel going through the eye of a needle, according to some rabbinical writings, signified a thing absolutely impossible. Michaelis says that a similar proverb, about an elephant passing through a needle's eye, is used in India." (Ryle, 236)

"The statement that only God is good puts a question mark against any idea that eternal life can be "earned" by being good." (France, 291)

Luke 20:27-38

It would be helpful to read the whole of chapter 20 to be aware of the context in which the next three encounters are set. Keep in mind that Jesus has just entered Jerusalem as the king and Messiah (Lk.19:28-40), and that the religious and political leaders want to see him dead (Lk.19:47-48), because of what he does and what he teaches.

"The whole of chapter 20 is set in the court of Gentiles, a vast public area (some 33 acres) surrounding the temple building, which at Passover was crowded with pilgrims from all over the Jewish world, and in which a teacher could gather a crowd" (France, 314).

"The Sadducees were an aristocratic group made up of the families from which the chief priests were drawn and their allies. Their rejection of the oral tradition of the Pharisees included rejection of belief in a resurrection." (Tannehill, *Luke*, 294). They prioritized the Law of Moses. They did not believe in angels. (G. Evans, *Luke*, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, MI, 2011, 304)

"'Equal to angels' does not mean ethereal. Rather it suggests that resurrection will have a certain kind of heavenly glory and dignity of form that carries with it freedom from demise through physical decline, disease or accident." (Nolland, *Luke*, 968).

Luke 19:1-10

Chiasm:

A - Jesus enters

B - Zacchaeus (wealth for himself)

C - The crowd (hostile)

D - Up the tree

E - Unexpected act of love

D' - Down the tree

C' - The crowd (angry)

B' - Zacchaeus (wealth used for many)

A' - Jesus final word of love (Bailey, 175)

"The system of taxation then in place was called "tax farming." The local person who acquired the right to collect taxes for Rome was expected to turn over a set amount to the authorities at the end of the year. How much was to be paid was at times predetermined, but as Otto Michel notes, 'in practice the tax-collectors were often the only ones with precise knowledge of the relevant statutes.' (Bailey, 176)

"The tax-collector was despised in rabbinic literature and in the New Testament, and he and his family were considered unclean...The system naturally produced graft and economic injustice. It was bad enough that Zacchaeus was a tax collector, but he had become *rich* in the process. In the vocabulary of the day 'tax collectors' and 'sinners' were often paired. The town naturally hated its chief collaborator." (Bailey, 176-177)

"Why mention that Zacchaeus is 'short in stature?' In ancient physiognomy, smallness in physical stature was generally seen as reflective of 'smallness in spirit' (*mycropsychia*)." The smallness in spirit often corresponded to greediness, small-mindedness, low self-expectations. The figure of Zacchaeus would have been viewed as a laughable, perhaps, despicable character." (Parsons, 278-279)

Sycamore figs, large trees with thick foliage, were normally planted outside of towns. This one was outside Jericho on the road up to Jerusalem. (Bailey, 178)

In the Middle East, "no guest selects his own host, nor does any guest (especially in the situation of oppression) invite himself into the house of a despised collaborator!" (Bailey, 180)

Luke 20:20-26

"The whole of chapter 20 is set in the court of Gentiles, a vast public area (some 33 acres) surrounding the temple building, which at Passover was crowded with pilgrims from all over the Jewish world, and in which a teacher could gather a crowd" (France, 314)

"The imposition of direct Roman rule over Judea and Samaria in AD 6 was followed by a census in order to impose a capitation tax on all citizens of the area. This particular tax was therefore a symbol of their political subjection, and so it was violently opposed by many Jews on patriotic ground." (France, 320)

Palestine at that time consisted of Judea, Samaria and Galilee. “Jesus, as a Galilean, was not subject to the controversial Roman tax in Judea.” (France, 321)

The Roman silver coin, used, for paying the tax, bore the portrait of the emperor and an inscription describing him as “son of God” and “high priest.” Strict Jews therefore regarded it as idolatrous and so refused to use it... By getting his questioners to produce a denarius, Jesus exposed their supposed patriotism as phony; they themselves were using the emperor’s coinage, so they had no grounds for refusing to pay his tax.” (France, 321)

20:21 “the imagery of the way is related to Jewish imagery of the conduct of life as walk.” (Nolland, 960)

Luke 20:41-44

If you have time, it might be helpful to read Psalm 110 (one of the Messianic Psalms) and discuss how the vision of God and of His Anointed One that it gives relate to Jesus’ life, death and resurrection.

“In Luke-Acts the Messiah is a descendant of David, and Jesus’ Davidic ancestry is emphasized as part of his qualification for the messianic role (cf. Luke 1:32-33; 3:31; Acts 2:29-36; 13:22-23). (Tannehill, 297)

“David is acknowledging the Messiah as his Lord. “My Lord” is the address of an inferior to a superior. Yet the father normally has greater dignity than the son, and David was the most famous king in Israel.” (Tannehill, 297)

“The Jewish concept of the messiah as the “Son of David” was focused primarily on a political leader who would reestablish the dynasty of David and regain Israel’s independence.” (France, 330)

20:43 – footstool: in great antiquity vanquished enemies were often depicted as bowed down before the conqueror, whose feet would rest upon them. (Evans, *Luke*, 304)

In Rom 1:3-4, Paul talks about Jesus being a descendent of David and the Son of God.

Resources:

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