

***Growing as Disciples and Stewards  
Living In and Living Out God's Grace  
July 2019  
Study***

**Date to post: July 10**

**Date of Luke 10:38-42 featured in Worship: July 21**

**Introductory video to be posted July 15**

**Introductory Comments**

Premise of "study": ". . . to love God with all of your mind . . ." (Luke 10:27)

Object of study for a disciple: God's Word

Theology of Word of God

- A dynamic, living power
- Jesus Christ the living Word present in written Word
- Discipleship is receiving and passing on the life of Jesus
- Study is a dynamic, deepening, growing life-long relationship with Jesus, carried by God's Word

Disciples are called to listen, live out and speak the Word

Importance of "Word" in Luke for transformation of

- Individual disciples
- Communities
- The world!

Overview of this month's Bible study

- The power of the Word of God in Luke
- Mary and Martha as examples of discipleship
- Jesus' Sermon on the Plain as a stewardship response to the Word

**Growing as Disciples: Study**

**Importance of the Word in the Gospel of Luke**

Please look up these passages (\* = this passage only occurs in Luke) and describe what they say about the impact of the Word in Luke (Who is speaking? To whom? What happens?). How can we apply this principle to our lives today?

\*Luke 1:38 "Here am I, the servant of the Lord. Let it be with me according to your word."

\*Luke 2: 15, 17 "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing (literally 'word') that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us."  
"When they saw this, they made known what had been told them ('word'). . ."

\*Luke 3:2 "The word of God came to John . . . as it is written . . ."

\*Luke 4:4, 8, 12 "It is written . . ."

\*Luke 4:17-19 "He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written . . ."

\*Luke 6:17-49 "Someone . . . who comes to me, hears my words, and acts on them."

Luke 8:4-15    “The seed is the word of God.”  
Path    hear, word taken away  
Rocks    hear, receive, no root, fall away  
Thorns    hear, choked, no fruit  
Good    hear, hold fast, bear fruit

\*Luke 24:1-12    Empty tomb  
“Remember how he told you . . .  
They remembered his words.”

\*Luke 24:13-35    Emmaus road  
“What are you discussing (‘what words are you throwing back and forth’)?”  
“How foolish . . . and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared!”  
“Were not our hearts burning within us . . . while he was opening the scriptures to us?”

\*Luke 24:36-49    Upper room  
“Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, ‘Thus it is written . . .’”

### **Luke 10:25-28, 38-42: Mary and Martha as Examples of Discipleship**

Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he said, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"<sup>26</sup> He said to him, "What is written in the law? What do you read there?"<sup>27</sup> He answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself."<sup>28</sup> And he said to him, "You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live."

<sup>38</sup> Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home.<sup>39</sup> She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying.<sup>40</sup> But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me."<sup>41</sup> But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things;<sup>42</sup> there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her."

#### *Context*

The lawyer answers his own question about eternal life by quoting Deuteronomy 6:5 (“Love the Lord your God with all of your heart . . .”) and Leviticus 19:18 (“Love your neighbor as yourself.”).

Loving the neighbor is developed in the story of the Good Samaritan (10:29-37). Loving God is then described negatively (Martha) and positively (Mary) in 10:38-42. In connecting this word to our lives, we are called to see how our lives are mirrored in both Martha and Mary!

How do you see each of these characteristics of Martha and Mary mirrored in your life?

Martha

Welcomed Jesus

Importance of hospitality in the ancient world and in Luke: a sign of the presence (or absence) of civilization, defining reciprocity around social, economic, spiritual boundaries.

Luke's persistent question: Who is welcome? (See Luke 15:1-2; 19:6)

The basis of welcoming all (Luke 15: lost/found/rejoice: "I have sinned . . .")

*How do we live out "all are welcome?"*

Mary

Sat at the Lord's feet

The position of a disciple! Applied to a woman!

Also the Gerasene demoniac (Luke 8:26-39)

Intentionally putting oneself in a position to listen to Jesus

*How do you put yourself in a position to hear Jesus' word?*

Listened to what he was saying

"Listen" = *akouo* (to hear and do!) (65x in Luke!)

Key biblical concept: listening

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Hear, O Israel . . .

Psalm 95:1

O that today you would listen to God's voice

Isaiah 6:1-10

My people listen, but do not comprehend

Luke 8:4-15

4 soils Hear the word

*How do you listen to God's word?*

Martha

Was distracted by her many tasks

"Distracted" = *perispao* (to be pulled or dragged away)

"Tasks" = *diakonia* (service!)

A "good thing" that can pull us away from the "one thing"

Thorny soil (Luke 8:14) "chokes" the word; it becomes unfruitful

Our full culture revealed in our schedules!

*What pulls us away from listening to the word?*

*At what point does a good thing become something that pulls us away?*

"You are worried and distracted by many things"

"Worried" = *merimnao* (concerned; can be + or – depending on object!)

Here: "many things"

"Distracted" = *thorubazo* (troubled, in an uproar)

Again, the power of "many things" to worry and distract

*What are the "many things" that worry and distract us?*

*What is the antidote for worry and distraction? (hint: "one thing" follows!)*

“There is need of only one thing”  
“One thing” empowers all things!  
Defined here:  
Sitting at Lord’s feet  
Listening to his word  
Choosing the one thing

Mary  
Chose the better part  
“Chose” = *eklegomai* (to call out, to choose)  
Intentionality

*How do we live out the drama of “loving God with all of our heart” through BOTH Mary and Martha?*

### **Steward Bible Study: Luke 6:20-26**

Then he looked up at his disciples and said:

"Blessed are you who are poor,  
for yours is the kingdom of God.

<sup>21</sup> "Blessed are you who are hungry now,  
for you will be filled.

"Blessed are you who weep now,  
for you will laugh.

<sup>22</sup> "Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. <sup>23</sup> Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets.

<sup>24</sup> "But woe to you who are rich,  
for you have received your consolation.

<sup>25</sup> "Woe to you who are full now,  
for you will be hungry.

"Woe to you who are laughing now,  
for you will mourn and weep.

<sup>26</sup> "Woe to you when all speak well of you,  
for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.

### **Commentary**

In its introduction (Luke 6:17-20) Jesus’ Sermon on the Plain addresses both the crowd and the disciples. What makes the difference? In its conclusion (Luke 6:46-49) Jesus describes a disciple as one who simply hears his word and does it, as opposed to those who hear his word and do not do it. Thus every person who hears this Sermon is challenged to become a disciple of Jesus by hearing and doing his word.

The Sermon describes paths that lead to blessing (experiencing God’s favor) or woe (the lament for the dead). Every disciple is confronted with blessing or woe, depending on their response to Jesus’ words.

The poor, hungry, weeping and hated are to be understood literally, likely reflecting the members of Luke's community. The "now" time indicator also reveals a present reality. Salvation in Luke envisions concrete actions of justice and relieving of suffering.

The radical reversal of human expectation of blessing reflected in this passage is prefigured in Mary's Magnificat (Luke 1:53: "He has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty."), John the Baptist's call to bear the fruit of repentance by sharing food (Luke 3:11), and Jesus' opening sermon in the synagogue at Nazareth ("He has anointed me to bring good news to the poor") in Luke 4:18.

Some important definitions:

Blessed Privileged recipient of divine favor

Poor Dependent on others in some way; not self-sufficient

Weep Can be understood as grief over injustice of suffering, or more on a spiritual level as the appropriate response to seeing the world accurately

Woe The lament for the dead

Rich Money is neutral, not inherently evil in Luke, but easily seduces one into an idolatry of wealth. Luke's consistent message is that distribution is the sign of the presence or absence of the kingdom of God. The rich fool (Luke 12:13-21) accumulates and stores his possessions with no regard to those in need or ultimately, to God. He is a fool.

Full now Note the obscene description of the rich man who "feasts sumptuously every day" while the poor man Lazarus dies of hunger at his gate (Luke 16:19-31).

Jesus' words in the Sermon on the Plain are a radical call to discipleship in every area of our lives. Our response to these words will reveal an ethic of accumulation or of distribution, blessing or woe, presence or absence of the kingdom of God.

A foundational stewardship principle is that all of life is a gift from God, entrusted to us for the glory of God.

Luke 6: 20-31 is the Gospel text for All Saints Sunday on November 3. It defines our connection with all of the people of God of every time and every place. Thanks be to God!

*How do we experience both blessing and woe?*