**KINGDOM PHYSICIAN**

**(Part Two)**

*Forty Daily Devotionals*

*from the Gospel of Luke 13-24*

*(Based on the NKJV)*

*Seminole Baptist Church*

*3330 Mission Road*

*Tallahassee, FL 32303*

***Daily Reading Schedule***

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Day** | **Scripture Reading** | **Date** |  | **Day** | **Scripture Reading** | **Date** |
| 1 | Luke 13:1-13 | 3/4 |  | 21 | Luke 20:1-14 | 3/24 |
| 2 | Luke 13:14-26 | 3/5 |  | 22 | Luke 20:15-26 | 3/25 |
| 3 | Luke 13:27-35 | 3/6 |  | 23 | Luke 20:27-36 | 3/26 |
| 4 | Luke 14:1-14 | 3/7 |  | 24 | Luke 20:37-47 | 3/27 |
| 5 | Luke 14:15-24 | 3/8 |  | 25 | Luke 21:1-13 | 3/28 |
| 6 | Luke 14:25-35 | 3/9 |  | 26 | Luke 21:14-24 | 3/29 |
| 7 | Luke 15:1-14 | 3/10 |  | 27 | Luke 21:25-38 | 3/30 |
| 8 | Luke 15:15-32 | 3/11 |  | 28 | Luke 22:1-13 | 3/31 |
| 9 | Luke 16:1-13 | 3/12 |  | 29 | Luke 22:14-23 | 4/1 |
| 10 | Luke 16:14-31 | 3/13 |  | 30 | Luke 22:24-34 | 4/2 |
| 11 | Luke 17:1-10 | 3/14 |  | 31 | Luke 22:35-46 | 4/3 |
| 12 | Luke 17:11-23 | 3/15 |  | 32 | Luke 22:47-60 | 4/4 |
| 13 | Luke 17:24-37 | 3/16 |  | 33 | Luke 22:61-71 | 4/5 |
| 14 | Luke 18:1-14 | 3/17 |  | 34 | Luke 23:1-12 | 4/6 |
| 15 | Luke 18:15-30 | 3/18 |  | 35 | Luke 23:13-25 | 4/7 |
| 16 | Luke 18:31-43 | 3/19 |  | 36 | Luke 23:26-43 | 4/8 |
| 17 | Luke 19:1-10 | 3/20 |  | 37 | Luke 23:44-56 | 4/9 |
| 18 | Luke 19:11-19 | 3/21 |  | 38 | Luke 24:1-14 | 4/10 |
| 19 | Luke 19:20-32 | 3/22 |  | 39 | Luke 24:15-35 | 4/11 |
| 20 | Luke 19:33-48 | 3/23 |  | 40 | Luke 24:36-53 | 4/12 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 13:1-13** | **DAY 1** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 13:1** |

***An Important Lesson***

No details are provided about the Galileans who were killed while apparently offering their sacrifices to God. We are told that, at Pilate’s instruction, their own blood was “mingled” (mixed) with the blood from their offerings. Such brutality marks the kind of persecution that Pilate brought against the earliest followers of Christ. We are given no explanation why these particular Christians were chosen to suffer in such a horrible way. The Jews of that time commonly believed that all suffering came as a result of sin and God’s judgment upon it. Many Christians still hold to this belief today. Jesus responded to the report of this event with a question about some men who had died in an accident while building a tower in Siloam. Jesus asked if those men had been worse sinners than others in that town. The answer was clear. People live and people die. Some die at a ripe old age and some die earlier in life. Life is filled with tragic stories of untimely deaths and unexplained calamities. The important lesson learned was that life in this world is temporary and fleeting and that people needed to heed God’s call to repentance so that they could be prepared for eternal life. To be prepared they needed to repent. The context of this story teaches us that we must prepare to die and that we should not procrastinate in doing so.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Refuse** to believe that suffering is God’s way of punishing us for our sins. **Believe** that trials and tragedies come into every life and that they come to teach us the importance of being prepared to meet God. The **Kingdom Physician** wants us to know that the only cure for sin is repentance!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 13:14-26** | **DAY 2** |
| **Focus Verses: Luke 13:18 & 20** |

***The “Kingdom of God”***

While God’s “Kingdom” is often referred to in the Old Testament, we do not see the phrase the “kingdom of God” until we get to Matthew 6:33 where Jesus commands us to “seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.” When you consider that this phrase is found only 31 times in the New Testament outside of Luke’s writings, compared to 40 times in just Luke and Acts, you get the idea that preparing to live in God’s kingdom was important to Dr. Luke! The word that is translated “kingdom” in our focus verses is a word that should not be confused with an actual kingdom, but the authority to rule one. To best understand what Jesus was referring to when He mentioned the “kingdom of God,” we need to examine the words “like” and “liken.” Both of these words were often used when Jesus told a parable. A parable generally consisted of a story to which we could compare its teachings to the Word of God in order to better understand the Word. In these two brief “parables” Jesus was offering His followers some insight into what the “kingdom of God” was “like.” In the sense that it was like the “mustard seed” that “grew and became a large tree,” we can see that Jesus might have been referring to the rapid, outward growth of His “kingdom.” The parable of the “leaven” might have been referring to a growth that was not visible to the eye. In either case, whether visible or invisible, or whether rapid or slow, both of these parables teach us that the growth of the “kingdom of God” is gradual and ongoing. The **Kingdom Physician** wants us to understand that God is constantly growing His “kingdom” whether we are visibly aware of it or not.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Seek** the “kingdom of God” by allowing God’s authority in your life to be constantly growing! **Read** His Word daily and **spend time** in conversation with Him. Do not be afraid to **ask** Him to show you what the “kingdom of God” is “like” every time that you read His Word!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 13:27-35** | **DAY 3** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 13:34** |

***Repetition!***

I have often mentioned that repetition was used to imply emphasis in ancient writings. Since they had no **bold font,** *italics,* and did not practice underlining, repeating words or phrases became their way of emphasizing an important truth or teaching. Such was the case with Jesus crying out, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem!” in our focus verse. However, there may be a form of “repetition” here that you may have never noticed. This same emphatic statement about Jerusalem is also found in Matthew 23:37. When you read that statement in Matthew, it is clear that the setting is in Jerusalem, after the Lord’s triumphant entry to that city, and during the final week of His life. In Luke, we are told that Jesus made this statement as He was journeying “towards Jerusalem” (Luke 13:22). It is entirely possible that what we have read today in Luke is a recording of a statement that Jesus repeated often. Since Jesus went from city to city preaching the Gospel, there is no question that He repeated many of His teachings and sayings. In the case of His powerful lamenting over Jerusalem, He may have not only repeated the name of His beloved city, but the same statement over and over again.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Refuse** to “give up” on witnessing to your friends and family members! **Believe** that the next seed that you sow may be the one that takes root and brings them to an understanding of God’s love and redemption plan. The **Kingdom Physician** would prescribe some “repetition” when it comes to emphasizing the importance of knowing Him as Savior!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 14:1-14** | **DAY 4** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 14:2** |

***“Dropsy”***

The word “dropsy” is found only this one time in the Bible. People knew very little about it in New Testament times and most people know little about it today. At least one translation simply states that this man had “a disease.” Other translations attempt to describe this disease by mentioning its symptoms. In them you may read things like “abnormal swelling” or “swelling with fluid.” One translation simply uses our modern medical term “edema” to describe this man’s condition. The kind of fluid retention that was noticeable to the **Kingdom Physician** on this particular day could have been from swelling due to congestive heart failure or failure of the kidneys. One medical report states, “The real cause of dropsy, however, is abnormal accumulation of morbid matter in the system. This accumulation is so great that the kidneys and liver become overloaded and unable to perform their purifying tasks properly. The stagnation of unhealthy fluid in the tissues can also be aggravated by the heart muscle being too weak to pump the blood with sufficient force through the veins and arteries to carry the necessary oxygen and nourishment to the cells of the vital organs. This can result in the poisoning of the whole system.” As you review the verses that follow 14:2, see if you can see that Jesus was trying to tell the religious leaders of His day that something was terribly wrong with their system of worship and service.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Understand** that “dropsy” was not a disease in itself, but a visible symptom of another disease or illness. Everyone could see that this man had a problem, but only Jesus could see the *cause* and only Jesus had the *cure* for it! **Refuse** to treat only the “symptoms” that are evident in your life and **ask** God to help you to determine how you can be cured from the “disease” that may be causing them.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 14:15-24** | **DAY 5** |
| **Focus Verses: Luke 14:16-17** |

***Come!***

Today’s focus verse mentions that the many people who were invited to the king’s banquet, for one reason or another, failed to appear when the supper was ready. In New Testament times, a formal invitation was delivered to all invitees some time before a banquet was held. Then, when the actual date of the event arrived, an announcement that the meal was ready was delivered to everyone invited. Although only three people are specifically described in this story, we should note that verse 18 clearly states that “they *all*…began to make excuses.” You might find it interesting that the word that is translated “excuse” in this story is most often translated “refuse” in the New Testament. In one place this word is even translated “reject.” The image here is not that the banquet holder was intolerant of excuses, but that he saw them for what there really were! John said that Jesus “came to His own (the Jews), and His own did not receive Him” (John 1:11). The host in our story had every right to be angry since each of these people had obviously accepted the initial invitation to his banquet but were now refusing to attend at the appointed time. How sad it must have been for Jesus to see His own people, who had accepted the prophecies of a coming Messiah, ultimately reject Him when the announcement of His arrival was made.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* As simple as it might be, the **Kingdom Physician’s** prescription is that we simply “come” to Him when He bids us. It is obvious from this story that “many” people are invited and that few really take this invitation to heart! If you “choose to refuse” anything, then **refuse** the temptation to place a higher priority on the things of this world than you do on the things of God!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 14:25-35** | **DAY 6** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 14:28** |

***Counting the Costs!***

The only other place that the word translated “count” in our focus verse is found in the Bible is in Revelation 13:8 where it is often translated “calculate.” After Jesus observed the great multitudes who were “with Him” (verse 1), He spoke to them about three ways that they might “count” or “calculate” whether or not they were truly able, or spiritually prepared, to follow Him. The word translated “cannot” in these three statements is the opposite of the word “able.” I do not think that Jesus was telling these people that they *were not* saved or that they *could not* be saved, but that they were not yet in a place where they were fully prepared to follow Him. Take a few moments today to consider the costs of being a committed follower of Christ. First, one who is going to be “able” to make a full commitment to Christ will be marked by *separation*. That person must place Him above all other relationships. The word “hate,” as it is used here, did not mean to loathe or despise, but to make something a lower priority. In other words, unless one is willing to make following Christ a higher priority than any other relationship, that person was not going to be “able” to truly follow Jesus. Second, Jesus said that the person who would be “able” to follow Him would be marked by *suffering*. The word “cross” that is used to describe the second “cost” of following Christ is the same word that is used to describe the cross upon which our Savior died. Third, those who will be “able” to truly follow Christ will be marked by *sacrifice*. Jesus said that those who would be equipped to follow Him would be those who would be willing to “forsake all that he has” (verse 33).

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Prayerfully consider** your commitment to Christ. **Look** for ways to make Him a priority in your life today. Be prepared for an opportunity to **make a right choice** today and be blessed!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 15:1-14** | **DAY 7** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 15:14** |

***“In Want”***

The Scripture that we have read today mentions a *lost* *sheep*, some *lost* *silver* and a *lost* *son*. Although some may use these stories to teach about salvation, it is important to understand what is really being said here. The sheep that was “lost” was already the possession of the shepherd just as the silver coin that the woman “lost” already belonged to her. It was only lost in the sense that she was no longer sure where it was. Just as much so, we are to understand that the “lost” son that Jesus mentioned in this parable was already a “son” to his father. He was not lost in the sense that he was no longer a son but he was lost in the sense that he was not where a son ought to be and he was certainly not doing what a son should have been doing. Instead, he had allowed his own personal ambitions and desires to take precedence over his relationship to his father. If you keep the story of the prodigal son in context with the verses that precede it, you will see that this is a follow up to the great truth about “counting” the costs associated with being a committed follower of the *heavenly* Father! When this young man decided to go his own way and do what he wanted to do, he soon found himself “in want.” The first time that this word is found in the New Testament is in Matthew 19:20 where a young man asked Jesus, “What do I still *lack*?” Just as the shepherd missed his lost sheep and the woman missed her lost silver, you can be certain that this young man’s father missed his lost son. But the father was not the only one who was missing something! The young man, out of relationship with his father, soon found that something was missing in his life and that he was “in want.”

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* The **Kingdom Physician** constantly emphasized the importance of His followers living in right relationship to Him. **Evaluate** you own actions and ambitions to see if they are self-centered or Christ-centered. **Seek** to always maintain a right relationship with the Father.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 15:15-32** | **DAY 8** |
| **Focus Verses: Luke 15:15 & 17** |

***“Then” and “When”***

Our two focus verses contain the words “then” and “when.” The “then” looks back at the moment in time when this young man thought he had all that he desired in life, including his full inheritance and the freedom to do with it what he would. He had his future and his fortune, along with the freedom to spend it anywhere he wanted. Of course, his decision to leave his father was a bad decision that soon led to a series of bad decisions. Soon he had spent all of his inheritance and found himself in the middle of a famine that ultimately resulted in him working for someone else and in a pig pen feeding swine! It was at that time that the “when” chapter began in his life. “When he came to himself” (literally “to his senses”) he made the decision to return to his home and cast himself at his father’s mercy. A point of interest in this story is found in the father’s words to the son that stayed home. When that son complained to his father about his faithful service never resulting in the kind of celebration that was given for his prodigal brother, his father reminded him that, “all that I have is yours” (verse 31). Since the father had already “divided” (verse 12) his possessions between his two sons, the one that lived so rebelliously and spent it all had no claim to the remaining possessions since they had already been given to his brother.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* Our **Kingdom Physician** would have us remember that “freewill” is anything but free. **Seek** to make the kind of decisions that accumulate blessings in heaven and do not “waste” (verse 13) what God has so graciously given you by placing more value on your will than on that of the Father!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 16:1-13** | **DAY 9** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 16:13** |

***No Exceptions!***

Today’s focus verse contains a principle that is in context with the parable of the unjust steward as well as the parable of the prodigal son. In both parables, the word “wasted” is used to apply to the irresponsible way that someone had handled their money (15:13 and 16:2). Both stories reveal some very sad character flaws in their central characters. There may not be anything that might influence a person’s character more than the love and constant desire for money! There is no other thing ever mentioned by Jesus that might “master” us like money and the desire for it. We often consider ourselves to be the exception to certain rules by thinking, “Well, that might happen to some, but it could never happen to me!” If you recall, Peter made that mistake when he promised the Lord that he would never deny Him, even if everyone else did! When Jesus said, “No servant can serve two masters” he meant that there was not one single person who could successfully divide their devotion between Him and anything else. The word that is translated “servant” here is a word that was not used by any other Gospel writer but Luke. In Matthew 6:24, Jesus made this statement and said that “No one (or “no man”) can serve two masters.” This is not a contradiction in the Bible. Jesus often repeated the same truths in different places and to different people and did so in a way that kept it in context with the message that He was delivering at that time and place.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Ask yourself**, “What is the **Kingdom Physician** trying to say to me in this focus verse?” **Read** the Bible like it was written to you – because you can rest assured that it was! Always **apply** what Jesus says to your own life and **take** your “medicine” when He points out your weaknesses!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 16:14-31** | **DAY 10** |
| **Focus Verses: Luke 16:19 & 20** |

***The Rich Man and Lazarus***

There has been much debate over the years as to whether the story of the rich man and Lazarus was the recalling of a literal event or a parable. On the most part, the question comes to mind because Jesus actually placed a name on the beggar that died and went to heaven. As far as I know, no other parable provides a name for one of its characters. While many people use this story to teach about the eternal torment of the lost in hell, Jesus was using it in a different way. He was speaking directly to the Pharisees as He was continuing to speak to them about their stewardship of the Word of God. The fact that the “rich man” was dressed in “purple and fine linen” suggested two things. Since purple was a color associated with *royalty* and fine linen was a cloth associated with the *priesthood,* Jesus was speaking of the blessed position that the Jews held in the eyes of God. I am sure that every Pharisee hearing this story immediately thought of Exodus 19:6, where God told Moses that Israel would be to Him, “a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” In Romans 9:4, Paul referred to the Jews as, “Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the Law, the services of God, and the promises.” While the rich man “fared sumptuously” every day, the lost and needy of the world remained as beggars at their feet. A careful reading of this story will reveal some things about hell, but it is, without doubt, a story that reminded the Jews that they were being poor stewards of God’s Word while living on earth!

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Remove** your spiritual blinders and **take** a long look at the world around you! **Believe** that what you know about Jesus could change the spiritual circumstances of those who so desperately need to have a **Kingdom Physician** and faithfully **“refer”** them to the One Who is your Savior!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 17:1-10** | **DAY 11** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 17:5** |

***Increase Our Faith!***

Although all of the Gospels contain important teachings on forgiveness, Luke’s is the only record that contains this amazing reaction to the Lord’s command that we should be willing to forgive our fellow Christians “seven times in a day!” The disciples understood fully what Jesus meant by that phrase. They knew that He did not mean that they could “keep score” and that they were no longer responsible for forgiving someone who sinned against them on an eighth time in one day! As far as I can tell, this is the only time that those who left all to follow Jesus ever asked Him to “increase” their faith! They listened to Him teach on prayer and they went about praying! They listened to Him teach on ministry and then went about doing ministry. But, when He addressed this issue of forgiveness, they knew that they did not have within them the ability to comply with this teaching without some supernatural assistance. The word that is translated “increase” in our focus verse is the same word that is translated “added” in Matthew 6:33. In that verse Jesus commanded His followers to, “Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things (material needs) shall be *added* to you.” In the verses that follow our focus verse, Jesus was careful to explain that their “faith” issue was not a matter of *quantity* but *quality* and that *genuine* faith is much more to be desired than a *greater* (amount of) faith.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Accept** the **Kingdom Physician’s** prescription for genuine faith and begin receiving doses of it each time that you read His Word. **Remember** that “Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God” (Romans 10:17). So, as you read the Word, pray, “Lord, please increase my faith!”

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 17:11-23** | **DAY 12** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 17:19** |

***“Well” Inside and Out!***

It is important to note that this wonderful story found only in Luke is the record of an actual event and not a parable. While on His way to Jerusalem, Jesus passed through Samaria and Galilee. As He was entering one of the villages there, He was met by ten men who were “lepers.” Since it was not permissible for them to intermingle with the public, and impossible for them to work for a living, it was not unusual for lepers to form small colonies just outside the gates of cities so that they could beg for food or money from those who were coming and going. No doubt, these men had heard about Jesus, because they “lifted up their voices” and asked Jesus for *mercy* and not for *money*! Jesus simply commanded them to go and show themselves to the priests, which was something that someone would do if they believed that they had been cleansed from leprosy. Jesus asked them to go *in faith* even while they were still lepers! Then, “as they went, they were cleansed.” One can only imagine how it would have been if one or more of them had decided to stay and wait for some more profound command, only to later learn that those who obeyed Christ’s simple command had been made whole. How sad it is to see that it was only “one of them” who, after seeing that he had been healed, “returned, and with a loud voice glorified God.” He then “fell down on his face” at the feet of Jesus, “giving Him thanks!” Jesus recognized that this man had received much more than a *physical* healing. This man had been made physically and *spiritually* whole!

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Express** your *gratitude* as faithfully and fervently as you expressed your *need*! **Develop** an “attitude of gratitude” and you will soon be exhibiting the kind of “wellness” that is on the inside!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 17:24-37** | **DAY 13** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 17:26** |

***The Days of Noah***

In an effort to explain how the days just before His second coming were going to be, Jesus likened them to “the days of Noah.” Since no one, other than his family, took Noah and his preaching seriously, they just went about “life as usual” and failed to see the importance of preparing for the coming flood. Jesus said that it would be like that in the last days. People will be busy with their daily lives, oblivious to the pending danger, and not realize that they should have taken heed to their many warnings until it will be too late. He then mentioned that people did the same things in “the days of Lot.” They ignored the signs and then perished in their ignorance! However, one of the most important aspects of the stories of Noah and Lot is that God first delivered His people *before* He destroyed the world or the city of Sodom. No person who has ever lived will be able to say that God brought judgment without first bringing a clear warning of its coming! How interesting it is that Jesus stated that those who were “on the housetop” while their “goods” were “in the house,” should not “come down to take them away.” In New Testament times, the roof was often used as extra space to the house. On the day of the Lord’s return, our hearts will no longer be focused on what we have “in our house” but on what we have “in heaven.”

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Prepare** your heart for our Lord’s coming! **Become** heavenly-minded now and you will never regret it when you finally stand before God’s throne! The **Kingdom Physician** would have you be in good spiritual shape and fully-prepared when the Day of the Lord arrives!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 18:1-14** | **DAY 14** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 18:1** |

***A Parable on Prayer***

The Gospel of Luke has often been called “The Gospel of Prayer.” This is due to the amount of attention that Luke paid to what Jesus *preached* on prayer and the way that He *practiced* prayer in His personal life. The “Parable of the Persistent Widow” is found in no other Gospel but Luke. The purpose of this story was not to teach us how to pray, but how to pray without losing heart. It is more of an *exhortation* to be faithful in prayer than it is an *explanation* of how to pray. It is not uncommon for people to “lose heart” when it comes to prayer. The Apostle Paul praised the prayer life of a man named Epaphras by reminding the Colossian believers that Epaphras was, “always laboring fervently for you in prayers.” So, Paul clearly believed that *praying* was *laboring*! As such, praying can become something that we discontinue to do faithfully if we are not careful. Some read this parable and become confused about the judge’s reluctance to answer this woman’s prayer and think that Jesus was saying that God is sometimes reluctant to answer our prayers. We should all be reminded that Paul (2 Corinthians 12:8) and even Jesus (Mark 14:39) prayed repeatedly for the same things that they had previously requested of God. If anything, this story encourages us to continually bring our prayer requests to God because He is faithful to answer those who will be persistent in their pursuit of His blessing.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* The **Kingdom Physician** would have us see prayer as a *first resource* rather than a *last resort*! **Avoid** being like the children who knock on doors and then run away before the door is opened. Prayer is not a children’s game but a lifestyle to be portrayed by those who faithfully acknowledge Jesus as their Lord!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 18:15-30** | **DAY 15** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 18:18** |

***The Rich Young Ruler***

Today’s Scripture reading contains another story that is often mistaken as a parable. We have to read the entire account to gain a full description of this man who came to Jesus. Verse 18 states that he was a ruler. Verse 21 implies that he was young. And, verse 23 states that he was not just “rich,” but “very rich.” The word that is translated “very” in verse 23 is translated “exceedingly” or “greatly” in other places in the Bible. One might suppose that there were people who would say that this guy “had it all.” He had his youth, his wealth, and he had great position in his community. Yet something drove him to come and speak with Jesus. We are often guilty of thinking that Jesus only came for the “down and outers” and forget that many “up and outers” also sought Jesus out during the days of His earthly ministry. When this man referred to Jesus as “Good Teacher” he used a term that was not used for other rabbis in Jesus’ day because it implied a complete goodness that no human being could possess. No one but God was ever referred to as being the kind of “good” that this man used to describe Jesus. There is no doubt but that this man had a clear understanding of Who Jesus was, yet still refused to abandon everything that he had and follow Him.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Consider** the blessings of the man in today’s story. He had *riches,* a *righteous lifestyle,* and *respect* as a ruler in his community, yet Jesus describedhim as someonewho “lacked”something. **Read** the **Kingdom Physician’s** diagnosis and prescription found in verse 22 and seek to **apply** it to your own life.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 18:31-43** | **DAY 16** |
| **Focus Verses: Luke 18:31-33** |

***A True Definition of “All”***

Just after the Lord’s conversation with the rich, young ruler, Peter made a statement on behalf of all of the disciples when he said, “We have left all and followed you” (verse 28). How did Jesus respond to Peter’s statement? He “then…took the twelve aside” and told them that He would be “delivered to the Gentiles” and then fully explained to them all that was going to happen to Him (verses 31-33). How sad it is to read that, even then, “they understood none of these things” that He said to them (verse 34). What He was doing was responding to Peter’s statement by giving them a true definition of what it meant to give “all.” To give all means to live in accordance with God’s written Word (verse 31). It also meant to be willing to be subjected to undeserved suffering and humiliation, even from the hands of those to whom we are giving our lives in service (verse 32). Furthermore, to give our “all” means to, if need be, give our very lives in service to those who treat us wrongfully (verse 33). Verses 35-43 contain a story that helps us to have an even greater understanding of how Christ gave His “all” in the face of such trying circumstances. As He was nearing Jericho with His disciples, a blind man cried out to Him for mercy. When others warned this needy man to be silent, “he cried out all the more.” Jesus stopped and commanded that the blind man be brought to Him and then asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?” How easy it is for us to consider “all” that our walk with the Lord has cost us and neglect to give one thing more. Here Jesus, so near to giving His life as a sacrifice for the sins of the world, still maintained His focus on doing what met the needs of others.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Believe** that Jesus deserves your “all” and be willing to **follow** His example in living sacrificially for others in spite of your own pending circumstances. The **Kingdom Physician** was always “on call” and willing to serve others. **Pray** for that kind of faithfulness in your own life!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 19:1-10** | **DAY 17** |
| **Focus Verses: Luke 19:1-2** |

***Zacchaeus***

The story of Zacchaeus is one of the most well-known stories in all of the New Testament, yet we would know nothing about this man if we did not have Luke’s Gospel. As we read this wonderful story, we should note three things about this very important Bible character. First, we should note that *he was rich* (verse 2). However, even though he was obviously a man of great possession, he, like the rich young ruler, still knew that something was missing in his life. He was so aware of his “lack” that he took extreme measures to get to where he could see Jesus. I have often wondered if he had another motive for climbing up into that tree that day! I have also often wondered if, because of his being of such “short stature,” that he might have climbed that tree so Jesus *could see him*! Because of his willingness to make every effort to meet Jesus, *he was made even richer* when he received Jesus joyfully (verse 6)! What this rich man received from Jesus on that day was something that his wealth could not possibly buy for him. However, the story does not end there because we are then allowed to see Zacchaeus *at his richest* (verse 8) when he vowed to share his possessions with others and to not allow them to ever again possess him. Jesus stated that this complete change in attitude and open confession of gratitude was evidence that this man had truly received salvation.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Refuse** to allow your possessions to possess you! Be willing to **share** what God has given you with others and to **make right** as many wrongs that you can! There is no doubt but that the **Kingdom Physician** made a remarkable, noticeable difference in this man’s life.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 19:11-19** | **DAY 18** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 19:11** |

***Another Parable***

We would be wise to see that this parable is not just about money but about faithfulness. Our focus verse reveals that Jesus gave this parable to help His followers understand that His kingdom was not going to begin “immediately.” Because of that, they needed to understand the importance of being obedient to Him with their possessions in the here and now. The story tells of ten men who were given material blessings by their master and then advised to do the master’s “business” with them until he returned. For reasons unknown, we are only made aware of how three of those ten servants responded to their master’s command. Upon the master’s return, one man gladly reported that he had faithfully employed the money that he had been given and that it had “earned” an amount equal to ten times more than what he had received. A second servant reported that his master’s money had been gainfully employed to the point where it had earned five times its value. In both cases, the master was quick to reward his servant in accordance to his obedience. It is important to note that even though it had been given to his servants to use, the money still belonged to the master and he had every right to expect that it would be used as he so desired. When the master spoke of their being “faithful in a very little” (verse 17) he was not speaking of the amount of money that they had received but that their faithfulness in something as “little” as money indicated that they could also be trusted with things of greater importance.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Learn** the intended lesson from this parable! The blessing that these men received was not because of what they did with the money they had been given, but about their faithfulness in employing it in their master’s business. **Remember** that the **Kingdom Physician** is not so impressed with what we have as He is with what we choose to do with it!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 19:20-32** | **DAY 19** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 19:20** |

***The Third Man***

We would do well to remember that the parable we read about yesterday and today followed the wonderful testimony of how Zacchaeus’ attitude about money had been radically changed after he met Jesus! He had gone from being *rich* in possessions to being at his *richest* when he no longer allowed his possessions to possess him! The third, and final, report to our story’s master revealed an entirely different attitude than that of the two reports from yesterday’s verses. This third man had understood the master to be more concerned about *money* than about *ministry*, so he had carefully hidden his master’s money and kept it safe and secure until his master’s return. The problem with this third man’s report was not that he did not have a large amount of money to return to his master, but that he had not obeyed his master’s command to employ it in his master’s business. A key word in this parable is “authority” (verse 17). The first two men had respected the “authority” of their master and had obeyed his command while the poor man in today’s story is likened to people who did not want their master “to reign over them” (verse 27). This pitiful man’s problem was that he had not obeyed his master’s command to be about his business. We would all do well to remember that our service to the Lord cannot be based on what *we think* but on what *God commands*! I am sure that this story was remembered by the two disciples who were then sent out to find the young colt that was soon to be employed in the Master’s business as He rode into Jerusalem.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Realize** that our **Kingdom Physician** only prescribes what is best for us. **Seek** to be immediately and fully obedient to His every command. **Surrender** to His authority today and you will not regret it when you stand before Him in Heaven!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 19:33-48** | **DAY 20** |
| **Focus Verses: Luke 19:33-34** |

***A Good Question and an Even Better Answer!***

I am neither surprised by the question of the owner of the young colt or the answer provided in the response of the Lord’s two disciples. The colt was the owner’s personal property and he had every right to question why someone would be taking it. The word that is translated “colt” here is the Greek word used to translate the Hebrew word that meant “donkey.” Zechariah had prophesied that, “Your King is coming to you…lowly and riding on a donkey” (Zechariah 9:9). When Jesus sent His two disciples after the colt, He had not provided them any explanation for their actions beyond the one that they obediently gave to its owner. Even though they probably had no idea why the Lord “needed” that donkey, they knew that He desired it and that they were not going to return without it! We do not always have to understand why the Lord gives us certain commands but we do always need to be faithful in obeying them. If the prophecy of the Messiah’s riding into Jerusalem on a donkey was to be fulfilled, then the Master’s command to these willing servants had to be fulfilled. We should never underestimate the value of obedience or our role that we are called to play in our Master’s service. No task is *unimportant*, and because of that, no task should be left *undone*!

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Obey God** at your every opportunity to do so and **refuse** to see any task done for Him as unimportant or insignificant. **Trust** the **Kingdom Physician** to prescribe only that which will bring His divine will to pass and fulfill His prescriptions as fully and quickly as possible!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 20:1-14** | **DAY 21** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 20:2** |

***More about “Authority”***

The events that we read about from Luke 20:1-21:36 all occur in just one day. The “these things” to which the “chief priests and the scribes” and the “elders” were probably referring to were probably the cleansing of the temple that we read about yesterday and maybe even the teaching that Jesus was giving in the temple on this particular day. The religious leaders wanted to know where Jesus had received His “authority” to do and say the things that they were seeing and hearing. Except for Revelation, no book in the New Testament contains this word for “authority” more often than Luke. In Revelation, the word is most often used to describe our Lord’s “authority” in Heaven while in Luke it is most often used to describe His “authority” on earth. It should not surprise us that the One who taught us to pray that His will would be done “On earth as it is in Heaven” (Matthew 6:10) would operate under the same “authority” on earth as He would in Heaven! As He often did, Jesus answered their question with a question of His own. When He asked them whether or not John’s authority to baptize was “from heaven” He was stating that Heaven was the source of His authority. The parable that followed would serve to remind those religious leaders that God had sent many “authorized” messengers to them over the years and that He was now sending His own Son to represent Him and that the way the wicked men of that story had responded to the owner of the vineyard’s son was the same way that they were now responding to Him.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Allow** Christ to be the ultimate authority in your life. **Know** that our **Kingdom Physician** knows what is best for us and that He alone can empower us to accomplish His will. **Do something** “heavenly” for someone who is stuck on “earth” today!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 20:15-26** | **DAY 22** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 20:15** |

***“They Cast Him Out…And Killed Him”***

When we read this parable that was spoken to “the people” we must remember that it was spoken in the presence of the religious leaders who had just questioned the Lord’s authority. His reference to “The stone which the builders rejected” and it’s becoming “the chief cornerstone” was a quotation from Psalm 118:22. Their familiarity with the Psalms would have, no doubt, caused these religious leaders to remember the words that followed that phrase in the song. In Psalm 118, the stanzas that followed the one quoted here were, “This was the LORD’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day that the LORD has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it” (Psalm 118:23-24). Jesus was basically telling them that they already knew the answer to their question and all that was now happening was “the LORD’s doing” and that, no matter how they chose to react to it, He was going to “rejoice and be glad in it.” How sad it is to see that these words of Christ did not lead these men to repentance. Rather, they responded by beginning to relentlessly pursue an opportunity to deliver Him to the “authority of the governor” (verse 20). I am always amazed that they would send people to “pretend to be righteous” (verse 20) to do such an unrighteous deed. The false flattery of these “pretenders” is not much different from what our Lord hears from many today!

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Be genuine** in all that you *say to God* and all that you *do for God*! **Live** in such a way that there is no question about your loyalty to the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. **Allow** His words to defeat His enemies and never fight His battles in your own wisdom or strength.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 20:27-36** | **DAY 23** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 20:27** |

***The Sadducees***

The Sadducees were a group of highly religious priests and political leaders who many considered to be better friends to Rome than they were to Israel or God. They rejected much of what the prophets had to say and accepted only what was written in the Books of Moses as Scripture. They refused to adhere to the traditions (interpretations) of the Pharisees because they believed that each man could interpret the Scripture as he saw fit and that no personal interpretation was wrong. These men were only mentioned in Matthew, Mark and Luke’s Gospels. Luke mentioned them several more times in Acts, but they are never mentioned again after that book. They were probably best described in Acts 23:8 where we are told that the, “Sadducees say that there is no resurrection--and no angel or spirit”. All three of the Gospel writers who mentioned this group defined them in that way. To believe that there is “no angel or spirit” meant to believe that when you were dead, you were completely dead and there was no life after death. This belief led to their refusal to believe that there was even a need for a resurrection. The Sadducees dissolved and disappeared after the destruction of the temple in 70 AD and were never again a religious force. As you read about this strange group of “unbelieving-believers” you will see that Jesus, knowing their beliefs about the Scriptures, always spoke to them from the writings of Moses, just as He did here in verse 37.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Beware** of the believer that is only interested in discussing the “difficult” teachings of the Scriptures and who has more interest in *arguing* the Bible than in *announcing* the Gospel. **Refuse** to allow others to rob you of the joy of believing in Heaven and life after death!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 20:37-47** | **DAY 24** |
| **Focus Verses: Luke 20:37-38** |

***The God of the Living!***

The statement that God “is not the God of the dead but of the living” is based on the information that is found in the story of the burning bush. The words of verse 37 are a quote from Exodus 3:6. However, the quote is not in full. In the account of Moses’ conversation with God at the burning bush, God said to him, “I am the God of your father - the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” Even though all three of those men were no longer alive on earth, God still spoke of His relationship with them in the *present tense*. He did not say to Moses, “I *was*” the God of your forefathers, but “I *am*” their God. The word that is translated “showed” in verse 37 is used very sparingly in the New Testament. Luke used it twice (once in his Gospel and once in Acts) and then John and Paul each used it once. It is a word that means to “disclose or make known something secret.” In John 11:57 we read, “Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a command, that if anyone knew where He (Jesus) was, he should ‘report’ it, that they might seize Him.” “Report” there is translated from the same word as “showed” here. God’s Word to Moses is still His Word to those who trust Him today. He is the God of the *here* and He is the God of the *hereafter*. Thus, the **Kingdom Physician’s** response to the question about the woman who married many brothers was that they should be considering the *here and now* and not just the *there and then*!

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Heed** the warning of verses 46-47 and **avoid** being like those who are very “Christian” in their public worship (words, deed, and prayers) and then evil in their private affairs by being evil in the way that they treat people. **Seek** to be a genuine follower of Christ in all of your relationships and dealings with people.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 21:1-13** | **DAY 25** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 21:2** |

***Two Mites***

If you desired to enter the Temple in Jerusalem in the first century A.D. you would do so through the eastern gate where Jesus made His triumphal entry. That gate opened to the Court of the Gentiles which was a large court paved with stones of various colors. It was open to all people including the money-changers who profited from the people who came to worship and offer sacrifices to God. This court was also called the Outer Court. The Temple proper was then surrounded by a terrace that was nine feet higher than the Court of the Gentiles. It was also surrounded by a five-foot high wall which was designed to keep the Gentiles out of the temple building. Signs were posted warning all Gentiles to come no further under penalty of death. Just beyond the Court of the Gentiles, the Susan Gate opened to another walled terrace called “the Court of the Women.” It was not so named because only women could worship there, but because that was as far as women could go in the temple. Women could not go beyond that wall. In the various courts of the temple there were strategically placed treasure chests to collect offerings. Jesus was near one of the collection boxes when he saw the widow give her two coins as an offering to God. Beyond the Court of Women were the Court of the Israelites and then the Court of the Priests where the altar of sacrifice was located. However, the “sacrifice” that caught the Lord’s eye on this day was the one made by the woman who had gone as far as she was *allowed to go* and then gave as much as she was *able to give.*

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Note** that this dear woman had only two coins but decided to give them both as an offering. **Remember** that even the gift of only one coin would have represented 50% of all that she *had* and not of all that she *made* that week! **Ask** God to give you such strong faith in the matter of giving!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 21:14-24** | **DAY 26** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 21:15** |

***Live Without Contradiction***

Yesterday’s Scripture reading began with the testimony of the widow who gave all that she had and concluded with the Lord reminding us that our personal persecutions can often become “an occasion for testimony” (verse 13). As today’s Scriptures begin, we see the Lord instructing us on how to take advantage of those “occasions” that might lead to a personal “testimony.” Every believer would do well to realize that we are all on trial every day of our lives. As such, we need to be daily trusting the **Kingdom Physician** for “wisdom” in answering our adversaries so that they may not be able to “contradict or resist” the validity of our testimony. The word that is translated “contradict” in our focus verse is a word that means to “speak against.” It is a word that is used only by Luke in the New Testament. The way that the word is used later in Acts 4:14 pretty much explains the meaning of the word. In that verse we learn that, after Peter and John’s meeting with the lame man at the temple gate resulted in his miraculous healing, the religious leaders called Peter and John before them, but, “after seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, *they could say nothing against it*.” We should all be living our lives in such a way that the evidence for our faith in God cannot be contradicted by anything that anyone might be able to say against us.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Pray** for the kind of personal testimony that will stand up against the attacks of the enemy. **Live** with the constant awareness that your every act can become a witness *for* or *against* Christ.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 21:25-38** | **DAY 27** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 21:36** |

***Pray Always***

On more than one occasion we find the Bible teaching us to pray “always.” Perhaps there is no better life to help us understand what that really means than the life of our Lord Jesus. The word that is translated “always” in our focus verse is a word that is most often translated “time” or “season.” There are at least two places in the Scripture where that same word is translated “opportunity.” To “pray always” means to be in constant contact with God throughout all of the “times” or “seasons” of our lives. The last two verses of today’s reading gives us a bit of insight into how busy the days had become for Jesus. In the “daytime” He was busy “teaching in the temple” so it was “at night” that He was able to spend time in personal and devotional time with His Father. However, there was no rest for our faithful Leader! After spending His nights in prayer, His days began “early in the morning” as “all the people came to Him in the temple to hear Him.” I think that it is important to note that the Bible does not simply say that “all of the people came to the temple” but that “all of the people came to the temple *to hear Him*.” There was a renewed spiritual interest in the people because they were hearing from someone who was spending time with God and who was able to explain the Scriptures to them in a way that they had never heard before!

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Commit** time to prayer! **Maintain** contact with God throughout your day and include Him in your decision-making processes. The **Kingdom Physician’s** life is a witness to us that speaking with God will greatly influence our ability to speak to our fellow man!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 22:1-13** | **DAY 28** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 22:2** |

***Sought***

Our focus verse clearly states that the religious leaders of Jesus’ day “*sought* how they might kill Him.” The word that is translated “sought” here is a word that means to “to search out by thinking, meditating, reasoning and inquiring.” This word is found twice in the first six verses of Luke 22. First, it describes the diligent efforts of the religious leaders to do away with Jesus (verse 2) and it is later used to describe the efforts of Judas to assist them in their evil deeds (verse 6). The statement that these men acted because “they feared the people” means that they saw the people transferring their loyalty from a place (the temple) to a Person (the Lord Jesus). As a result of His ever-growing popularity, two common enemies of Jesus, “the chief priests and the scribes,” joined forces in search of a plan to kill Him. As you read these verses, it is important to note that it was Judas who must have initiated the ultimate plan and that he must have gone to them offering his services to help them capture and kill Jesus. Verse 5 clearly states that they “*agreed* to give him money.” As such, we understand that they were simply responding to a plan that he had suggested. John 12:6 revealed that Judas had a weakness for money by disclosing that “he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it.” So Satan cleverly used a pre-existing weakness to motivate Judas to do the unthinkable. Our enemy has not changed much over the years. And, I am sad to say, neither have many who have pledged to follow Him.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Refuse** to be a person bound and controlled by sin and greed! **Ask** the Lord to free you from the power of sin and its powerful, persuasive draw. **Pray** for strength in your times of temptation and **resist** the devil when he tempts you to betray the One who gave His all for you!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 22:14-23** | **DAY 29** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 22:21** |

***“The Hand of My Betrayer”***

It is clear from the Gospel records that no one but Jesus knew who it was that would betray Him. The fact that the disciples “began to question among themselves which of them it was who would do this thing” clearly discloses that Jesus never revealed that it was Judas who had betrayed Him. Apparently there was nothing about the outward look or actions of Judas that would reveal that his heart was no longer in the ministry and no longer committed to Christ. Obviously, he had found a way to keep up “appearances” even though he had now joined forces with Satan himself! Because of that, *everyone* at the table heard Jesus announce that “the hand of my betrayer is with Me on the table” (verse 21) but *no one* knew who it was. However, a quick comparison to John’s account of this conversation reveals something wonderfully important to us. While the other Gospels indicate that many of the disciples began to ask the Lord, “Is it I?” John’s Gospel records that John asked, “Lord, who is it?” From that record, we can clearly discern that John, like everyone else at the table, had no idea *who it was* that had betrayed Jesus, but that he most definitely knew *who it wasn’t*!

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Lift** your own hands to the Lord today and **ask** that they never be used to betray Jesus in any way! **Ask** the **Kingdom Physician** to give you a daily dose of faithfulness that will keep your heart true to Jesus at all times.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 22:24-34** | **DAY 30** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 22:24** |

***A Recurring Conversation***

How sad it is to see that, after spending three years walking and talking with Jesus on a daily basis, these men, at this time, are still arguing about who is greatest among them. When you remember the verses that precede this one, it gives the appearance that this current discussion regarding “greatness” was born from their concerns over which of them might have been the one to betray Jesus. This “Who Is the Greatest” theme seems to have been a constant conversational topic among the disciples. Just after Jesus stated that He would be betrayed and killed (Matthew 17:22-23) the disciples came to Him asking, “Who then is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” (Matthew 18:1). The issue surfaced again in Matthew 20:20-26 as the mother of James and John approached Jesus asking that they be granted to sit at His right and left hand in His kingdom. Mark 9:33-34 records a time when the disciples discussed this same topic while walking with the Lord on the road to Capernaum. Luke 9:46 records the same argument about greatness that is described in Matthew 18:1. And now, just hours before His arrest and death, His disciples are once again discussing who might be the greatest among them! In John’s account, Jesus answered this argument by something that He did! It was at this time, and in response to this argument, that He “rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciple’s feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded” (John 13:4-5). Only Luke records the brief conversation between Jesus and Peter that is recorded in 22:31-32. Since Peter was, no doubt, one of the “eyewitnesses” to which Luke referred in 1:2, then we might assume that he learned of this private conversation from Peter himself.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Believe** that the example of the **Kingdom Physician** is the permanent cure for pride and arrogance! **Seek** to serve others and you will soon find yourself growing to be more like Jesus!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 22:35-46** | **DAY 31** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 22:38** |

***Enough***

Just after Jesus stated that it was time for Him to fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah 53:12 about His being “numbered with the transgressors” and that the end of His life on earth was near, the disciples spoke up and said, “Lord, look, here are two swords” (verse 38). I will have more to say about these brave men and their swords tomorrow, but today I want to clarify some confusion regarding the Lord’s response to that statement. When Jesus said, “It is enough” He was certainly not saying that their two swords would be enough to withstand the forces that were soon to come against Him, but that there had now been “enough” talking and that He was ready to move forward in the fulfillment of God’s great plan for the redemption of mankind. After He led them to a place where He often went to pray, He told the disciples to “pray” and then went a short distance from them to speak privately with the Father. When He “rose up” from that time of agonizing prayer, He came “to His disciples” and “found them sleeping” (verse 45). Only Doctor Luke records the fact that, as Jesus was praying, “His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground” (verse 44). He was also the only Gospel writer to mention the fact that “an angel appeared to Him from Heaven, strengthening Him” (verse 43). In all of the New Testament, only the Book of the Revelation has more to say about “angels” than the Gospel of Luke or the Book of Acts.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Recognize** that there is a time when the *talking* must end and the *walking* must begin! **Refuse** to allow your pride to get the better of you and lead you to overpromise and underperform.  **Seek** to be a steady, faithful servant to Christ at all times and in all ways.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 22:47-60** | **DAY 32** |
| **Focus Verses: Luke 22:47-48** |

***The Kiss of Betrayal***

One writer described the betrayal of Judas as “Satan gaining the upper hand in the human heart.” How sad it is to see that, when Judas first approached Jesus on the night of His betrayal, he had the audacity to greet him with a ceremonial kiss! When one considers the tense of the Greek verb that is translated “kiss” here, and understands that it means to “kiss repeatedly” or “to be continually kissing,” then you can get a better idea of how sickening this false display of affection must have been. Both Matthew and Mark tell us that this “kiss” was merely a “sign” or “token” as to which of the men in the darkened garden was Jesus. One can only imagine how the question that Jesus asked of His betrayer that night must have burned through his very being. “Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a *kiss*?” After so much hypocrisy, duality, and pretention, Judas dared to choose a sign of affection as his sign of betrayal. But, isn’t that what a person would have usually done in the usual situation? Surely Judas must have considered that it would have looked even more suspicious if he had not greeted Jesus with a kiss! Would the other disciples not immediately think that something was wrong if Judas had greeted Jesus without affection? So Judas chose to do what he would have usually done if he had not been busy collecting his blood money – his “bounty” for delivering Jesus to those who wanted Him “dead or alive.”

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Consider** the sorrow that must fill the heart of our **Kingdom Physician** when we choose to be publicly *displaying* our love for Him when with His friends and then privately *betraying* Him when we are with His enemies. **Refuse** to allow your public worship to become nothing more than a “sign” or “token” to others. **Remember** that being faithful is a choice!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 22:61-71** | **DAY 33** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 22:61** |

***“The Lord…Looked at Peter”***

I have often wondered which act hurt our Savior more – Judas’ betrayal or Peter’s denial. Both of these men were leaders among the disciples. Peter was often the spokesman and Judas was obviously the treasurer. Yet both of these men eventually betrayed Jesus on the night of His arrest – one by what he *did* to benefit himself financially while the other by what he *did not do* to protect himself physically. After Peter’s *boasting* was so quickly followed by *betrayal*, Jesus simply “turned and looked” at him. A look back to the first time that Jesus met Peter helps us to understand the significance that should be attached to the “look” that Jesus gave Peter on this night. John records the first meeting between Jesus and Peter, as well as the first words that Jesus ever spoke to him. When Andrew brought Peter to meet the Savior, we are told that, “Jesus looked at him” and “said, ‘You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas’ (which is translated, A Stone).” The word that was used to describe the way that Jesus saw Peter in their first meeting is no different than the word that is used to describe the way that Jesus saw him on this night in which the prophecy of Jesus was fulfilled. The one that had been known as “Simon Peter” (the “Rock”) had now become “Cephas” (the “small stone” or “pebble”). A great ministry lesson is found in this story. From it we learn that God would not have us see people any differently after they have failed us, or even after they have seemingly betrayed us. A shepherd must *love* the sheep – *all* of the sheep – and *all* of the time!

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Never forget** that “Christ died for us while we were still sinners” (Romans 5:8) and that He does not change the way that He sees us just because we sometimes sin against Him. **Believe** that the **Kingdom Physician** sees no case as hopeless!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 23:1-12** | **DAY 34** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 23:9** |

***No Comment!***

Luke 23:6-12 tells the story of Jesus before Herod and is the second to last section of Scripture that is found only in Luke’s Gospel. There is something quite unusual about this story in that Herod became the only person that Jesus met to whom He had absolutely nothing to say! I have always found it interesting that Jesus was willing to answer the questions of Pilate but then refused to answer the questions asked of Him by Herod. I am sure that this meeting proved to be a great disappointment to Herod. He had heard much about Jesus and wanted to see Him for quite some time. You can look back at Luke 9:7-9 and see some of the questions that this man had long held concerning Jesus. But, now that Herod’s chance had finally arrived, Jesus refused to speak to him! I first concluded that Jesus must have remained silent before Herod in honor of John the Baptist! After all, Herod was the one who had imprisoned John and then had him beheaded. But later I came to understand that Jesus really remained silent before Herod in our honor. Never forget that we are told that Jesus spoke with “authority.” By that, the Bible means that whatever Jesus said was indisputable. Had Jesus chosen to declare His innocence before Herod, Herod would have had no other option but to dismiss all charges against Him. Had that happened, Jesus would not have died for our sins. And, had Jesus not died for our sins, you and I would not be saved!

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* While you **thank God** for all that He has to say to us, take some special time today to **thank Him** for what He did *not* say to Herod. The **Kingdom Physician** knew that the only cure for our sins was His dying on the cross for us and refused to love *self* more than He loved *sinners*!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 23:13-25** | **DAY 35** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 23:14** |

***No Fault***

No Gospel emphasizes the innocence of Jesus more clearly or often than the Gospel of Luke! As you are reading in these next days, consider that our Lord’s innocence is emphasized no less than six times in this 23rd chapter! The first of those six times is found in an earlier passage where Pilate declared, “I find no fault in this man” (23:4). The second statement of Christ’s innocence is found in today’s focus verse where Pilate again stated that he could “find no fault” in Jesus. A third statement regarding our Lord’s innocence is found in verse 15 where Pilate continued to argue with the religious leaders by saying, “Nothing deserving of death has been done by Him” (verse 15). And then, the fourth witness came as the crowds cried out for Jesus to be crucified. Pilate tried once more to silence them by repeating, “I have found no reason for death in Him” (verse 22). As we complete this chapter, we will see two more testimonies regarding the innocence of Christ. The first will come from one of the thieves who hung on a cross beside Jesus. As one thief blasphemed Jesus, the other “rebuked” that man and said, “This man has done nothing wrong” (verse 41). Finally, we have the testimony of the centurion who, after watching Jesus die, proclaimed, “Certainly this was a righteous man” (verse 47). Matthew’s Gospel states that this centurion was not alone in his opinion of Christ by teaching us that “those with him” (Matthew 27:54) were saying the same things about Jesus.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Take advantage** of every opportunity afforded you to speak a word of witness regarding the sinless life and sacrificial death of Jesus Christ! **Share** your personal testimony with someone today. **Speak** boldly of and about Jesus on a daily basis!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 23:26-43** | **DAY 36** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 23:33** |

***There They Crucified Him***

There is a powerful, four-point sermon outline to be found in today’s focus verse. I first heard it used by a fellow student many years ago while I was in Bible College. On Friday nights, many of us would gather in the dining room to take turns preaching. On one of those special nights, Thampi Joseph, a missionary student from India, stood and preached this simple sermon outline from the phrase, “there they crucified Him.” His points began with “*There”* = *The Place!* The Scriptures declare that “when they had come to the *place* called Calvary, *there* they crucified Him.” “*They”* = *The People!* Verse 35 speaks of “the people” that “stood looking on.” How sad it is to realize that the rich and the poor and the rulers and the peasants found something in common when they expressed their hatred of Jesus and demanded His death! “*Crucified”* = *The Punishment!* There was no more agonizing way to die than the way of the cross. Because of the weight of their hanging body, an individual on the cross had to pull up with their arms and push up with their feet in order to breathe. After hours of hanging, the individual usually died from suffocation after they could no longer push up far enough to fill their lungs with air. The custom of breaking the legs of those who were sentenced to die on the cross allowed the executioners to speed up the process by limiting the victim’s ability to push up with their feet and fill their lungs with air. *“Him”* = *The Person!* Never forget that it was Christ Jesus, the virgin born, sinless Son of God that hung on the cross in our place!

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Thank** God for the cross and for the One who went there in our place! It was there that the **Kingdom Physician** bore our sins so that we could be healed from the dreaded curse of sin. Believing that He bore our “c-u-r-s-e” is the only things that “c-u-r-e-s” our sin!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 23:44-56** | **DAY 37** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 23:46** |

***The Seventh Saying from the Cross***

Today’s focus verse contains the seventh, and final, of the known statements that Jesus uttered while hanging on the cross. Of those seven recorded sayings, three of them are recorded by Luke and they are all three found here in Luke 23. The first saying is found in Luke 23:34, where Christ prayed, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” The second saying from the cross was spoken to one of the men who hung dying with Jesus on that fateful day. To him, Christ promised, “Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise” (23:43). The third statement that Jesus made from the cross concerned the care that He desired that John provide for His mother (John 19:26-27) while the fourth utterance was the agonizing cry recorded in Matthew 27:46, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” The fifth and sixth statements were both very brief and both were recorded by John. Those brief statements were, “I thirst!” and “It is finished!” The final words from the cross were, “Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit.” It was after this seventh saying that our Lord Jesus “breathed His last.” However, we know this was not the end and that the ministry of Christ was far from over. One can only imagine how long those nine hours seemed to our suffering Lord and those fearful, yet faithful, followers who watched Him die.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Refuse** to take what God has done for you for granted! **Replay** the events of that fateful day described in the Gospels on a regular basis and **remember** that it was for you that He hung dying on that cross. **Repent** of any selfish ambition that has led you to do less than your best for Him!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 24:1-14** | **DAY 38** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 24:10** |

***An Emphasis on Women***

No Gospel places a greater emphasis on the role of women in the life and ministry of Christ than the Gospel of Luke! As we have studied this Gospel, I have mentioned more than once my belief that Luke may have interviewed Mary as one of the “eyewitnesses” that he spoke of in his introduction to this book. One of the major differences between Matthew and Luke’s Gospels is found in the fact that Luke traced the lineage of Jesus through His mother, Mary, while Matthew traced it through His earthly father, Joseph. Luke’s action was quite unusual in the Jewish culture of Jesus’ time. Luke’s birth narratives of both John the Baptist and Jesus are both told from the woman’s perspective. He makes references to women and their stories an astounding 45 times in this book. There is no question but that women received special attention in Luke’s Gospel! In Luke 8:1-2, Luke recorded the fact that women were actively involved in the monetary support of our Lord’s ministry here on earth. Only Luke mentions “Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod’s steward” and the “many others” (women) who were faithful financial contributors to our Lord’s work (Luke 8:3). Luke became the only writer to even mention Joanna or Susanna by name when he mentioned them together in that verse. Luke also mentions the women who followed Jesus all the way to the cross (23:49) and, in today’s text, he acknowledges that it was two women, with one of those women being Joanna, that Jesus first appeared after His resurrection from the grave.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Pray** especially today for the women in your life and for all of the women in our church! **Pray** for their ministry and **seek to minister** to them. **Send** a card or **make** a call to one of the faithful female servants in our church and let them know that you are praying for them.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 24:15-35** | **DAY 39** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 24:18** |

***A Good Team!***

Even though Luke is recognized for the mention of so many faithful women in his Gospel story, he also paid attention to recognizing some very special men about whom we would know very little without this book. In today’s focus verse he mentions Cleopas as being one of the disciples who sadly walked down the road to Emmaus just after the death of Christ. John mentioned this good man’s wife, Mary, as being one of the women “who stood by the cross of Jesus” with Mary the mother of Jesus. After Jesus joined these men in their walk, Cleopas mentioned to Jesus that “certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us…saying they had seen a vision of angels who said He was alive” (verses 22-23). Later, as Jesus “sat at the table with them” and “took bread” and then “blessed and broke it” (verse 30), this good man, and his unnamed travelling companion “had their eyes opened and they knew (recognized) Him” (verse 31). Cleopas and his friend then “rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem” and joyfully reported to the 11 disciples that “The Lord is risen indeed” (verses 33-34). One can only imagine the willingness of this man, Cleopas, to repeatedly give this amazing testimony of his meeting with Christ on that day and how He “made Himself known” to him and his companion in such a special way.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Never forget** that our wonderful **Kingdom Physician** has done the very same thing for all of us by allowing us to know Him in a very personal and powerful way! **Faithfully speak** a word of personal testimony at every opportunity and **refuse** to remain silent about what the Lord has done for you!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 24:36-53** | **DAY 40** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 24:41** |

***Food***

While all of the Gospel stories mention this meeting with Jesus, and Mark mentions that the disciples were eating when Jesus appeared to them, only Luke recorded the fact that Jesus asked them to give Him some “food.” Only Luke mentions that the disciples gave Jesus “a piece of broiled fish and some honeycomb” at that meeting. As silly as it may seem to mention, Luke was careful to record several stories about banquets and feasts that we do not find in the other Gospels. Throughout this book, we have read at least 19 references to food or to a meal – and 13 of those references are found only in the Gospel of Luke! I personally believe that Luke had a great appreciation for the importance of gathering together and sharing meals together as believers. I hope that you have truly “feasted” on the amazing information that Luke compiled for us so that we, like Theophilus, could “know the certainty of those things in which we have been instructed” (Luke 1:4). In closing, let me share something of importance to you about Luke’s growing relationship with Theophilus. In this book, Luke addresses this man with the honorific, “most excellent Theophilus.” However, in his second writing to this man, the Book of Acts, Luke simply refers to him by his name and does not include his title. In Bible times one only addressed nobility on a first name basis if they were either relatives or the closest of friends. Because of this, many believe that Theophilus had become a Christian “brother” to Luke as a result of the evidence that Luke had provided him about Jesus!

**Prayer** **Emphasis:**

* Thankyou for walking through these last chapters of Luke with us. Our prayer is that you have been blessed through the reading of God’s Word. Please contact us at the365church.com or [seminolebc@centurylink.net](mailto:seminolebc@centurylink.net) to learn how you can have a personal relationship with the **Kingdom Physician**!