**KINGDOM PHYSICIAN**

**(Part One)**

*Forty Daily Devotionals*

*from the Gospel of Luke 1-12*

*(Based on the NKJV)*

*Seminole Baptist Church*

*3330 Mission Road*

*Tallahassee, FL 32303*

***Daily Reading Schedule***

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Day** | **Scripture Reading** | **Check** |  | **Day** | **Scripture Reading** | **Check** |
| 1 | Luke 1:1-13 |  |  | 21 | Luke 7:11-28 |  |
| 2 | Luke 1:14-25 |  |  | 22 | Luke 7:29-48 |  |
| 3 | Luke 1:26-38 |  |  | 23 | Luke 7:49-8:10 |  |
| 4 | Luke 1:39-56 |  |  | 24 | Luke 8:11-25 |  |
| 5 | Luke 1:57-66 |  |  | 25 | Luke 8:26-39 |  |
| 6 | Luke 1:67-80 |  |  | 26 | Luke 8:40-56 |  |
| 7 | Luke 2:1-14 |  |  | 27 | Luke 9:1-17 |  |
| 8 | Luke 2:15-32 |  |  | 28 | Luke 9:18-36 |  |
| 9 | Luke 2:33-52 |  |  | 29 | Luke 9:37-48 |  |
| 10 | Luke 3:1-17 |  |  | 30 | Luke 9:49-62 |  |
| 11 | Luke 3:18-38 |  |  | 31 | Luke 10:1-16 |  |
| 12 | Luke 4:1-15 |  |  | 32 | Luke 10:17-37 |  |
| 13 | Luke 4:16-30 |  |  | 33 | Luke 10:38-11:13 |  |
| 14 | Luke 4:31-44 |  |  | 34 | Luke 11:14-28 |  |
| 15 | Luke 5:1-16 |  |  | 35 | Luke 11:29-41 |  |
| 16 | Luke 5:17-32 |  |  | 36 | Luke 11:42-54 |  |
| 17 | Luke 5:33-6:11 |  |  | 37 | Luke 12:1-12 |  |
| 18 | Luke 6:12-26 |  |  | 38 | Luke 12:13-23 |  |
| 19 | Luke 6:27-42 |  |  | 39 | Luke 12:24-44 |  |
| 20 | Luke 6:43-7:10 |  |  | 40 | Luke 12:45-59 |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 1:1-13** | **DAY 1** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 1:3** |

***An Orderly Account***

Luke begins his record by stating that he wrote with a *very significant purpose*. He wanted to provide all present and future followers of Christ with “an orderly account of the ministry of Jesus Christ. Even though “many” had previously written about Jesus, Luke wanted to write with an emphasis on the chronological order of the events recorded in the history of Christ. Luke is the only Bible writer that used this Greek word that is translated “orderly” here. By comparing today’s focus verse to Acts 11:4, you will see that Luke wanted to write things in the specific order in which they occurred. These early verses of Luke also include some information about some *very significant people*. Here we meet Zacharias and Elizabeth, who were among the few people that the Holy Spirit ever declared to be “righteous before God” and were said to be “walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord” in a “blameless” fashion. However, even in the lives of these two very obedient, righteous people, Luke recorded what had to have been a *very significant problem.* Verse 7 informs us that they “had no child, because Elizabeth was barren. The NKJV begins that sentence with the word “but.” Early on, the **Kingdom Physician** wanted his readers to understand that even the most dedicated believers may experience trials and tribulation in this life.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Concentrate** on the *blessings* you have received and **resist** the temptation to focus on the *burdens* that day-to-day life may bring into your experience. It is easy to say, “God is blessing us, *but…!”* **Focus** on living the life to which God has called you and **trust** Him to strengthen you as you face life’s problematic situations!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 1:14-25** | **DAY 2** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 1:14** |

***Joy and Gladness***

Today’s focus verse includes two words that, especially as they are used in the English language, are considered to be very similar. However, in the language in which Luke wrote, these words expressed two entirely different thoughts. The word that is translated “joy” comes from a word that is often used in the New Testament to describe *overcoming joy*. This overcoming type joy describes the mindset of those who have had significant and beneficial changes in their situations or circumstances without experiencing significant changes in attitude. For example, this word was used to describe the change in the attitudes of the women that visited the tomb of Jesus only to learn that He was no longer dead but very much alive! Matthew 28:8 states that upon hearing from the angel that Jesus was alive, “they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy.” The word that is translated “gladness” in our focus verse is also describing joy, but it is a stronger word that implies that our overcoming joy has become an *overwhelming joy*! For example, in the 24th verse of Jude, this same Greek word is translated “exceeding joy.” Zacharias and Elizabeth were told that a son would come into their lives. As a result, they would experience all of the typical “joy” that any parent might experience. However, because God chose to send them this promised son in a miraculous way and at a miraculous time, their “joy” would become so overwhelming that it would grow into “gladness.”

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Allow** the **Kingdom Physician** to write a prescription for overwhelming joy in our life by serving Him faithfully even while in the midst of less than desirable circumstances. **Realize** that doing so will soon allow us to **express** the kind of “gladness” that will testify to those around us!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 1:26-38** | **DAY 3** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 1:28** |

***Rejoice!***

We are told that, when the angel Gabriel was sent by God to inform Mary about the miracle that was to occur in her life, his first word to her was “rejoice!” Some English Bibles use either “hail” or “greetings” to translate the first word of this angelic announcement. In the various English translations of the Bible, this word is translated “rejoice” more than any other way. Yesterday’s devotional associated the word “joy” with our overcoming difficult and desperate situations while “gladness” was associated with the overwhelming desire to express our joy to others. Now, another similar word is used to describe the kind of joy that is associated with obedience. The first “joy” that this word was used to describe was the long-awaited reward of the magi who, after following the Star for approximately 12 to 18 months, finally saw it stop over a house that they entered and found the young child Jesus Who was born King of the Jews! Matthew 2:10 tells us that, “When they saw the star, they **rejoiced** with exceedingly great joy.” Unlike the wise men, Mary’s “rejoicing” was to come at the onset, and not the end, of what would surely be a difficult “journey.” Whether the blessing comes at the beginning or end of our experience, we are commanded by our Lord to “rejoice” throughout the various experiences of life (see Matthew 5:12).

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Imagine** how pleased God must be when we learn to “**rejoice**” just as much at the *onset* of our experiences as we do at the *outcome* of our experiences. Our **Kingdom Physician** will regularly remind us that the greatest joy is reserved for those who **trust** God just as much when their testing begins as they do when it ends!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 1:39-56** | **DAY 4** |
| **Focus Verses: Luke 1:41-42** |

***Blessed!***

Thus far, we have briefly studied three very important words that are found in the “orderly account” which Luke desired to write for his fellow believers. Those three words were “joy,” “gladness,” and “rejoice.” Today’s focus verses include another similar word when we are told that Elizabeth, while “filled with the Holy Spirit” loudly declared Mary to be “blessed!” The Greek word that is translated “blessed” here is used in at least three ways throughout the gospels. Those three ways are included in the first three times that the word is found in the New Testament. First, it is used in association with *consideration*. In Matthew 5:44, Jesus commanded His followers to “bless” those who cursed them. As such, He was commanding them to show special consideration and kindness to those who showed no consideration or kindness to them. We would do well to remember that the prescription that the **Kingdom Physician** gave to those early believers is still good “medicine” for us today! Second, this same word is used in association with *consecration*. Matthew 14:19 tells us that Jesus first “blessed” the five loaves of bread before He used them to miraculously feed well over 5,ooo people! Then, this same word is used in association with *celebration*. In Matthew 21:9 we read where those who were present at the time of our Lord’s triumphant entry into Jerusalem shouted, “Hosanna to the Son of David: “Blessed” is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.”

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Consider** the fact that Elizabeth, with full knowledge of how difficult life would be for a young woman who was found pregnant before marriage, still loudly pronounced Mary to be “blessed.” **Believe** that God can turn your *heaviest burdens* into some of your *highest blessings*! **Encourage** someone who is experiencing difficult times today.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 1:57-66** | **DAY 5** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 1:58** |

***Joy is Contagious!***

In today’s focus verse we are confronted with yet another word that expresses the kind of joy that is available to those who carefully follow the commands of their **Kingdom Physician**! On day two we read about the Angel of the Lord telling Zacharias that he and his wife would have “joy and gladness” and that they would “rejoice” at the birth of a long-desired son. On day three we found Elizabeth rejoicing with Mary at the thought of her being pregnant with God’s own (and only) begotten Son. Now, on day five, we find that Elizabeth’s joy affected the lives of those around her. Luke 1:58 tells us, “When her (Elizabeth’s) neighbors and relatives heard how the Lord had shown great mercy to her, they rejoiced with her.” The kind of “rejoicing” that is described here is one that can be shared with others. Luke’s gospel is the only one that uses this word and he only used it word three times. However, in each of the three usages, it is clear that this kind of “rejoicing” will definitely affect those around us. After today’s focus verse, this word is found again twice in Luke 15 where we read about the “friends and neighbors” who were requested to rejoice with the shepherd who had found his lost sheep and the woman who had found her lost coin ( 15:6 & 9).

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Ask** God to make you a “Contagious Christian” whose praise and joy spreads to the lives of others. When we **praise God** *privately* we will soon find ourselves praising Him *publicly*!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 1:67-80** | **DAY 6** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 1:80** |

***No Surprise Here!***

It should not surprise us that the first chapter of Luke concludes with the statement that the miracle son of Zacharias and Elizabeth, John the Baptist, “grew and became strong in spirit.” Every time that I read that statement I am reminded of the words of Nehemiah 8:10, “the joy of the Lord is your strength.” As we recall the statements in earlier passages regarding the joy of Elizabeth and now read the beautiful prophecy of Zacharias that is recorded in today’s verses, we cannot help but think that such people would train up a child that would become “strong.” Depending on the version of the Bible you are reading, this prophecy of Zacharias begins with the word “blessed” or “praise.” Notice that the first word in this message of Zacharias is “praise.” This is yet another word that is translated “praise” in the Scriptures. This is the first and only time that this word was used by Luke. It is only found elsewhere in the gospels in Mark 14:61 where we read about the high priest asking Jesus, “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?” The kind of “blessing” that this word describes is a blessing that can only be given to a person by God. This word *always* refers to God’s blessing and *never* to a blessing that is derived from any human source. John the Baptist was raised by a man who knew the blessings of God, and, as a result, he became a blessing to his father and mother as well as to everyone who has ever been exposed to his life story.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Express** joyful praise for the Lord in the presence of your children. Lovingly **appreciate** and **compliment** your fellow believers to them. **Avoid** making critical remarks or repeating gossip about others. Our **Kingdom Physician** is also the **Kingdom Pediatrician** Who knows what is best for our children!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 2:1-14** | **DAY 7** |
| **Focus Verses: Luke 2:10 & 13** |

***More About “Joy” and “Praise”***

Today’s first focus verse contains the second time that the word that was earlier translated “joy” is found in Luke 1:14 is found in the Gospel of Luke. When we discussed this kind of “joy” (on day two) I stated that this kind of joy “comes from a word that is often used in the New Testament to describe *overcoming joy*.” By that, I mean that this word is most often used to describe the mindset of those who have had significant and beneficial changes in their situations or circumstances. You can be sure that the angel that spoke to the shepherds about this kind of joy was well aware that an event was going to take place that night that would ultimately change the “situations and circumstances” of millions of people for many years to come! The word that is used to describe the angelic choir and their “praising God” is here used for the first time by Luke. This is also the first time that this word is ever used in the New Testament. Although this word is found only nine times in all of the New Testament, every one of those times describes this as the kind of praise that is very vocal. In each of the situations where it is used, it describes praise to God which is either found in the form of singing, speaking, or shouting! The last time that this word is used in the Scripture is in Revelation 19:5 where we read, “Then a voice came from the throne, *saying*, ‘*Praise* our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!’”

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Find** a way to publicly praise God today – whether by singing, speaking, or even shouting! **Ask** the **Kingdom Physician** to put a song in your heart, a word in your mind, or a shout on your lips that simply cannot be quenched.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 2:15-32** | **DAY 8** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 2:20** |

***More “Verbal” Praise!***

Today’s focus verse contains the second time that the word for spoken or verbal praise is used in the New Testament. Yesterday we read about the angelic choir “praising” God and now we find the same men that made up their “audience” doing exactly the same thing! It is pretty safe to say that it was a heavenly “song” that first brought the shepherds to the manger and that a heavenly “song” remained with them when they finally left that amazing scene. This verbal praise was based on what the shepherds had “heard” and seen. Notice that what they heard and saw was exactly as it had been “told them.” Because of this, we come to understand that the source for this kind of verbal praise to God is His own spoken Word! When we hear what God has to say to us, it greatly affects what we say to others. But, even more, our hearing *what* God has to say to us affects the *way* that we say things to others! Notice that the praise described in Luke 2:20 is the kind of praise that glorified God. Today’s focus verse contains the first time that this word translated “glorifying” is found in the Gospel of Luke. According to the dictionary of the Greek language in which the New Testament was written, this word was used “to cause the dignity and worth of some person or thing to become manifest and acknowledged.” It should not surprise us that the kind of praising and glorifying that expresses God’s *worth* is the kind of praising and glorifying that is based on God’s *Word*.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* Our **Kingdom Physician** would describe a daily dose of Scripture for all of His children! **Commit** to daily Bible reading and prayer and you will soon find that you have “caught” a good case of this “Contagious Christianity”!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 2:33-52** | **DAY 9** |
| **Focus Verses: Luke 2:36-37** |

***A “Super Senior”***

Today’s first focus verse is both the first and final mention of the woman Anna in all of the New Testament. This wonderful woman’s name literally means “grace.” It could well be said that this was one person who truly lived up to her name! Anna is the Greek form of the Hebrew name Hannah. Just as there was only one Anna mentioned in the New Testament, there was only one Hannah mentioned in the Old Testament. If you recall, Hannah was the mother of Samuel, who, like her New Testament namesake, was faithfully committed to the service of the Lord. The woman of whom we read today was said to be “of great age.” Our second focus verse tells us that her “approximate” age was 84. I say “approximate” in this devotional because the Holy Spirit said “about eighty-four” in verse 37! This faithful woman was a long-time widow who lost her husband just eight years after she was married. Since women often were married in their early teen years in Bible times, Anna had probably been alone for a very long time. Luke tells us that this woman “*served* God with fastings and prayers night and day.” The kind of *service* that Anna offered to God was first mentioned in Matthew 4:10 when Jesus sent Satan scampering by reminded him that, “It is written, You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall *serve*.”

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* Our **Kingdom Physician** might prescribe a good dose of faithful service to help keep us feeling young and vital in God’s service. **Thank** God for our faithful seniors and their significant service to our Savior and church. **Express** your appreciation to one of our “Super Seniors” today!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 3:1-17** | **DAY 10** |
| **Focus Verses: Luke 3:2-3** |

***The “Rhema” Word***

While there are at least four different Greek words that are translated “word” in the New Testament, the word used in today’s focus verse is “rhema” which always signifies a “spoken” word from God. This word is first found in Matthew 4:4 when Jesus referred to “every word which proceeds from the mouth of God.” Luke used this word more often than any other Gospel writer, and when you include the times that it is mentioned in Acts (also written by Luke), it is used by Luke nearly twice as many times as all of the other Gospel writers combined. What else would you expect from a writer that promised to provide an “orderly account” of the history of Jesus and His ministry? The first time that “rhema” is found in the New Testament is when Mary received a spoken message from Gabriel and she responded, “Let it be to me according to your *word*.” The “rhema” word was the “thing” that was *spoken* of when the shepherds *said*, “Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this *thing* that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us." The “rhema” word was later translated as the “saying” that was told the shepherds concerning the child Jesus (2:17). Because of the way that this word is used in the New Testament, we can clearly understand God actually “spoke” to John the Baptist while he was in the wilderness. What did John immediately do after he heard a “rhema” Word from God? Our second focus verse tells us that, after he *heard*, he immediately *went* into the entire region around the Jordan, preaching.”

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* If there is one thing that our **Kingdom Physician** might prescribe to His church today, it could be immediate obedience to all that He has spoken to us! **Believe** that the best way to learn *more* from God is to **obey** that which we have already heard.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 3:18-38** | **DAY 11** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 3:18** |

***John “Preached”!***

Other than the one time that that the word translated “preached” is found in Matthew 11:5, Luke is the only Gospel writer that used this word – and he used it often. All four of the Gospels record this beginning of the public ministry of John the Baptist and all four record the fact that he “preached”! Even though today’s focus verse contains the first time the English word “preached” is found in the Gospel of Luke, the actual Greek word has been used twice in our previous verses. Looking *back*, and depending on the translation from which you are reading, the word that is translated “preached” here is translated “good news” or “glad tidings” in both Luke 1:19 and 2:10. However, looking *forward*, and depending on the translation from which you are reading, we will see this same Greek word translated “gospel” in Luke 4:18, 7:22, 9:6, and 20:21. Later, as Luke was writing the Book of Acts, he again used this same word to describe the preaching that the early church was doing and this same word was translated “gospel” at least four times in that book. One thing is clear from this word study, John preached the same thing that Jesus preached and the early church also preached the same thing that Jesus preached. Our **Kingdom Physician** knows that there is only one cure for our sin problem – the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Seek** to become proficient in the matter of explaining the “gospel” to others. **Practice** your presentation privately and you will find it much easier to **preach** it publicly. The Bible clearly teaches that the responsibility of preaching the Gospel falls to every believer.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 4:1-15** | **DAY 12** |
| **Focus Verses: Luke 4:3, 7, & 9** |

***“If”***

While the books of Matthew, Mark, and Luke all record the fact that Jesus was tempted in the wilderness by the devil for 40 days, only Matthew and Luke record the detailed conversations that examine the three areas in which Jesus was tempted. In both Matthew and Luke we find the word “if” three times because each of the three temptations either questioned or challenged some truth from God’s Word. As you review the focus verses once more, underscore or highlight the word “if” in your Bible and realize that it was the devil’s intention to sow seeds of doubt into the mind of Christ while He was in this time of testing. Since we are told that Christ “was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15), we can conclude that the sum of these three “ifs” represented sin and temptation as a whole. Each of Satan’s three “if” statements contained some truth from God’s Word. However, each statement was not complete or within the context of God’s truth. To each “if” statement, Christ responded with an accurate quotation from the Word of God. However, there was at least one accurate statement made by Satan in that meeting. In verse six, after showing Christ all of the kingdoms of the world, Satan said, “All this authority I will give You, and their glory; *for this has been delivered to me*, and I give it to whomever I wish.”

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Learn** from your tests and seek to always respond to temptation in a biblical manner. **Read** Psalm 119:11 right now and then **meditate** on it throughout your day. If you have not already done so, **memorize** this verse of Scripture and store it away for your own times of temptation. Our **Kingdom Physician** teaches us that only God’s Word can strengthen us in our times of testing and temptation.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 4:16-30** | **DAY 13** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 4:23** |

***“Physician”***

Today’s focus verse contains the word from whence this devotional guide gets its name. In His response to the question about His being “Joseph’s son”, Jesus refers to Himself by using the term “Physician.” This word is found only seven times in the New Testament. Six of those times it is found in the Gospels with three of those six times being found in the Gospel of Luke. The term that Jesus used here is the same term that was used to refer to a fully-trained medical practitioner. In both Mark and Luke (Luke 8:43) we read about the woman who had an issue of blood and how she had spent all of the money that she had saved during her entire lifetime on “physicians” in an effort to be healed. In both of those accounts we are told that this woman had not been helped by her physicians and Mark goes on to say that her condition actually worsened even while she was under their care! You know the rest of the story! After just one moment of contact with the **Kingdom Physician** this woman was made well. Outside the Gospels, this word is found only once in the remainder of the New Testament. It was affectionately used in Colossians 4:14 where the Apostle Paul referred to the writer of the Gospel story that we are currently reading as “Luke, the beloved *physician*”!

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Praise** God for sending His Son to be our spiritual, emotional, mental, and even physical healer! **Pray** for someone who is experiencing health issues today and **let them know** that you have prayed for them.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 4:31-44** | **DAY 14** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 4:40** |

***“He…Healed Them”!***

Although we are sure that the first *recorded* miracle performed by Jesus was the turning of the water into wine at the wedding in Cana of Galilee (John 2), there is some difference of opinion as to the first recorded *healing* miracle that the Lord performed. In any case, we can be sure that today’s Scripture reading includes the first healing miracles recorded in the Gospel of Luke. We first saw the word that is translated “healed” in today’s focus verse in the 23rd verse of this chapter, and, in that context, it was used to describe a human physician healing a patient. One can only imagine the interest and excitement with which Dr. Luke wrote about these first healing miracles. In Luke’s Gospel, the first recorded healing miracle is that of Peter’s mother-in-law. After that incident involving the very private healing of that one individual on the Sabbath Day, Luke goes on to record the fact that immediately after the sunset marked the end of that Sabbath Day, “all those who had any that were sick” brought them to Jesus and “He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them.” However, today’s reading includes three forms of healing. Verses 31-37 record Jesus healing a man from demonic possession. Immediately after that, verses 38-41 record Jesus healing one person, and then many other people, from “various diseases” (verse 40). Then verses 42-44 record the fact that Jesus began to preach the “kingdom of God” and, thereby, heal people from spiritual death and the penalty for sin.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* While we must **realize** that our **Kingdom Physician** came into this world primarily to “heal” man’s sin problem, we must also **recognize** that He also came to deal with mankind’s emotional and physical problems. Although evangelism should be the primary thrust of the church, we should **avoid** limiting the scope of our work to evangelism alone.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 5:1-16** | **DAY 15** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 5:1** |

***“Pressed”***

Today’s focus verse includes a word that is used for the first time in Luke as well as in all of the New Testament. Verse one informs us that the people (literally multitudes of people) “pressed about” Jesus so that they might “hear the Word of God.” How exciting it is to see that the *first* time that this word is used in Luke is to explain that reason given for this great crowd that gathered was so that they could hear Him as He was teaching of the Word of God. As the ministry of Jesus grew, and the news of His miracles spread throughout the land, many people began to come to see Him for other reasons. In John 6:26 Jesus clearly stated that many of those who came seeking him came “because (they) ate of the loaves and were filled.” Just as it was for Jesus, so it is for those who desire to serve Him through His church today. There are many people who come for selfish reasons and who are more interested in what the church can do for them *physically* than *spiritually*. The first, and foremost, draw for the church should be the teaching and preaching of the Word of God. Jesus brought a new perspective to God’s Word in the sense that He could explain it with accuracy and authority. People were hungry to hear God’s Word preached with accuracy and authority in those days and I am sure that they still hunger for it today!

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Believe** that people still *need* and *desire* to hear truth from God’s Word. **Realize** that what people really need to hear is not what *we think* but what *God says*! **Pray** for your pastor, and all pastors, that they will boldly declare God’s Word with accuracy and authority.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 5:17-32** | **DAY 16** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 5:32** |

***An Unusual Situation***

On Day 13 I mentioned that the word that is translated “physician” was included in Luke 4:23 and again in Luke 8:43 in the story of the woman who was miraculously healed from a long-term illness. The mention in 4:23 was the first time that this Greek word was used in Luke while the mention in 8:43 was the third and final time that this word is found in Luke. In between, in 5:31, we find the only other time that this word is used in the Gospel of Luke. Just as we recognized that this word was used to identify people who were trained medical practitioners when we discussed the story of the healing of a woman with a *physical* need, so must we clearly recognize that this same word is now used to identify our need for *spiritual* healing. Our **Kingdom Physician** came primarily to bring healing to man’s *spiritual* needs. Although we have seen the English word “sick” earlier in Luke, this is the first time that it was translated from this particular Greek word. This same Greek word is found only one other place in Luke (7:2), where it is used in reference to the physical condition of the centurion’s servant. So, when Jesus stated that He had not “come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance” He was clearly stating that spiritual sickness is just as real, if not more real, than any physical sickness.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Believe** that Jesus can make an *immediate* and *permanent* difference in the lives of those who are plagued with the curse of sin! **Seek** to refer others to the Great Physician at every opportunity. Make every effort to prepare yourself to **be a witness** to others by developing strategies to introduce Christ into various conversations and situations that are afforded you.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  **Scripture Reading: Luke 5:33-6:11** | **DAY 17** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 6:11** |

***Some “Sabbath Situations”***

Today’s reading may be found in the New Testament, but it sure seems to deal with what some people consider to be some Old Testament issues. The closing verses of chapter five deal with fasting while the first verses in chapter six deal with two situations regarding the Sabbath. The first “Sabbath situation” arose because, as His disciples followed Jesus through a grain field on a Sabbath, some of them “plucked the heads of grain and ate them.” This action caused the Pharisees to ask an interesting question. They asked Jesus, “Why are you doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath?” I find that question to be interesting because the Scripture never states that Jesus was plucking grain and eating it. In fact, the Scripture clearly states that *His disciples* were plucking and eating the grain! (A lesson to be learned here is that *our* actions often cast a reflection on *our* Lord!) The second “Sabbath situation” arose because Jesus chose to heal a man with a withered hand on the Sabbath. In this situation, the Pharisees never had the chance to complain about what Jesus was doing because He responded to what they were thinking before they could speak! When Jesus mentioned “doing good” on the Sabbath, He was referring to such priestly activities as the circumcision of a child on the commanded eighth day (see John 7:23). If the priest was commanded to circumcise on the eighth day after a child’s birth, and the eighth day fell on a Sabbath, then the priest should not violate the command to circumcise in a timely manner in order to honor the Sabbath. If an earthly priest should not delay his spiritual duties because of the Sabbath, neither should He Who was the highest priest of all!

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Avoid** the temptation to be critical and judgmental of others. **Refuse** to take issue with God when your issue is really with people! **Realize** that our **Kingdom Physician** specializes in curing critical attitudes and judgmental dispositions!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 6:12-26** | **DAY 18** |
| **Focus Verses: Luke 6:12 & 13** |

***Opposites!***

Our Scripture begins with Jesus on a mountain praying “all night” to God. It then tells us “when it was day He called His disciples to Himself and *from them* He chose twelve whom He also named as apostles.” The next verses include the names of the 12 disciples that Jesus “also named apostles.” I have always loved reading verse 12 of this chapter and being reminded that Jesus was on a “mountain” and that He called the disciples to come up to where He was! I also love reading verse 17 and seeing that, immediately after these 12 men were called to be apostles, they were “with Him” when He came back down that mountain and that He immediately involved them in His ministry to “the great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem…who came to hear Him and be healed of their diseases.” However, these men, like most that listened to Jesus, must have been somewhat surprised at His first recorded public sermon. In that sermon, He included a lot of statements that were probably just the opposite of how most people would think. He spoke about the “poor” being “blessed” and the “hungry” being “filled!” He talked about “rejoicing” when you are “persecuted and hated!” But, as we read on, we can see that it was also going to be just the opposite for those who thought themselves to be rich, happy, or full according to this world’s standards.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Learn** to measure success by God’s standards and not the standards of this world. **Note** the “woes” that are listed in verses 24-26 and see if they are not different than anything that this world would teach you!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 6:27-42** | **DAY 19** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 6:36** |

***A Very Unique Quality***

In Luke 6:36 we see the word “merciful” twice. There are only three places in all of the New Testament where we will read about being this kind of “merciful” and two of those three times are in our focus verse! It is important to see that Jesus clearly commanded people to be merciful to others and to do so by showing people the same kind of mercy that He has shown us. The only other place where we find this word in the remainder of the Bible is in James 4:11 where we read, “Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord--that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.” That verse echoes the latter part of our focus verse. How much more clearly can God declare His expectations about the way that we treat people? Verse 31 teaches us, “Just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise.” We have declared that to be the “Golden Rule.” If that truly is the “Golden Rule”, we would then have to say that verse 36 is the “Platinum Rule” because it exceeds every expectation that the “Golden Rule” implies. God can use the words of today’s focus verse to plant two wonderful seeds in our thought life. The first seed will produce the understanding that there are some ways that He will help us to be like Him and the second will teach us that one of the unique qualities that He can introduce into our lives is the ability to treat people just as He would treat them.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Realize** that our **Kingdom Physician** sometime cures what “ails us” by helping us to learn what might cure the spiritual “ails” others! **Seek** out an opportunity to be merciful to someone today!  **Ask** God to supply you with a prescription for some “mercy” today.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 6:43-7:10** | **DAY 20** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 7:10** |

***Some Medical Terminology***

It is very difficult to write a *short* devotional based on the Scripture that we have read today! To expound on any one of these wonderful verses would take *pages* and here we are restricted to just one *paragraph*. Since our devotional theme is **Kingdom Physician**, I am going to limit my comments to the first part of chapter seven and the story of the healing of the centurion’s servant and pay special attention to the word “well” or “whole. Some translations translate this word as “healthy” or “in good health.” This particular word is found three times in Luke’s Gospel (5:31, 7:10, and 15:27) and then nowhere else in the remainder of the New Testament. This word is interesting to me because Luke, a trained physician by trade, was the only Gospel writer to use it. Since the Holy Spirit is the one who guided each writer of the Bible, it occurred to me that the Holy Spirit knows exactly how to communicate with each Christian in a way that we can clearly understand God’s will for our lives. Today’s word “well” is not the only medical term that is mentioned only in Luke. In the same sense, there are some financial terms mentioned by Matthew (the tax collector) that are particular to that Gospel while there is some fishing terminology that is found only in John’s Gospel.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Read** your Bible faithfully and **ask** God to speak to you in terms that you understand. There is nothing wrong with admitting that you do not understand something and asking for help! **Trust** the Holy Spirit to do His job and He will surely guide you into all truth! Our **Kingdom Physician** could not have a better practicing partner!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 7:11-28** | **DAY 21** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 7:14** |

***A Very Special “Touch”***

Our focus verse includes a very special word that introduces us to a very special teaching about Jesus. Luke was only led by the Holy Spirit to use this word in the recording of seven events in the life of Christ. Of these seven events mentioned by Luke, only three of them describe a situation where Jesus was the one doing the touching. One would do well to research all of the situations where it is recorded that Jesus “touched” someone, but a brief review of how this word is used in this Gospel will be enough to prove that His touch was indeed *a very special touch*! First, we note that our Lord’s touch was a *defiant* touch! In Luke five he “touched” a leper and here, in today’s reading, He touched the coffin in which was the body of a dead man. Both of these “touches” would have rendered one spiritually unclean in the eyes of those who adhered to the strictest interpretations of the Law! Second, we see that our Lord’s touch was a *delivering* touch! In Luke five one man was delivered from *disease* while another man was delivered from *death*. The last “touch” of Christ recorded by Luke (22:51) finds Malchus being delivered from *deficiency* and *deformity* because Jesus took the time to heal his ear after Peter cut it off in the garden! Finally, in between the stories already mentioned, we find a story that causes us to see that our Lord’s touch was a *desired* touch! When we get to Luke 18, we will read of those who brought their children to Jesus desiring that He would “touch” them!

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Admit it!** Christians are a bit “touched!” **Seek** to have the **Kingdom** **Physician’s** “touch” on your heart and **share** His “touch” with your own hands as you minister to the spiritual and physical needs of others!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 7:29-48** | **DAY 22** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 7:34** |

***Christian “Friendship”***

The word that is translated “friend” in Luke 7:34 is found in 21 stories recorded in the Gospels and 14 of those stories are recorded in Luke! It is apparent that Dr. Luke was very interested in the very special kind of relationship that is available to all believers. Although we first read about the special friendship that our **Kingdom Physician** has to offer back in Luke 7:6, I purposely waited to discuss this word until we reached this place in the Scriptures to expound some on Christian “friendship.” True Christian “friendship” is about *provision*. In Luke 11:5-8, we see a “friend” who provided bread to someone in a time of desperate need. Next, we find Jesus teaching that Christian “friendship” speaks of *protection*. In Luke 12:4, Jesus told His followers that they need “not be afraid” of those who could bring them bodily harm. An even closer look at how this word was used by the **Kingdom Physician** reveals that this kind of “friendship” has much to do with *placement* when we see that a “friend” is called to sit at a “higher” place at a wedding feast in Luke 14:10. But, perhaps the most important point about Christian “friendship” is made in Luke 15:6 & 9 where we see this word associated with *praise* as we are told about the “rejoicing” of the shepherd who found his lost sheep and the woman who recovered her lost coin.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Practice** true Christian “friendship” in all of your relationships and **seek** to be one who provides for the physical needs of others and praises God for the unique relationship that we have with the One Who has called us to sit at the “higher” table with Him!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 7:49-8:10** | **DAY 23** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 8:8** |

***Good Ground!***

While the parable found in Luke 8:4-10 is most often referred to as “The Parable of the *Sower,*” it is also a parable about *seeds* and *soils*. In tomorrow’s Scriptural explanation of this parable, we will see that the seed is “the Word of God” (8:11). In that same explanation, Jesus will also reveal that the “soil” represented the “hearts” of those who heard the Word of God (8:12)! However, today’s devotional will help us to understand a very important teaching from God’s Word that will serve as a source of great encouragement to those who desire to reach others for Christ. In this story we are told about four conditions of the human hearts of those who hear the Word of God. Of those four conditions, only one (25%) of those who “heard” God’s Word experienced the kind of spiritual growth that resulted in good fruit in the lives of the hearers. We are often discouraged because everyone who hears God is not willing to make the kind of commitment to which He calls them. In this story we are taught that, even though we faithfully share God’s Word with others, only about 25% of those with whom we share it will make the kind of commitment that will lead to true Christian fruit in their lives. But who among us would not be thrilled if every fourth person to whom we witnessed about Christ would become the kind of committed follower that is described in Luke 8:8?

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Become** the kind of committed Christian that will **plant the seed** of God’s Word to as many hearts as possible even though you know that not everyone is going to make a true commitment to Christ!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 8:11-25** | **DAY 24** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 8:15** |

***“Keeping” God’s Word***

After reading about the four different kinds of “soils” (conditions of the human heart) that were described in the Parable of the Sower, we now learn what makes the difference in the hearts of those who ultimately become the kinds of followers who “bear fruit.” Only those who “keep” God’s Word will become the kind of follower that truly exhibits a life that has been radically redeemed by the **Kingdom Physician**. The word that is translated “keep” in our focus verse is a word that means to “hold fast, keep secure, or to keep firm possession” of something. While it is possible that all four of the types of individual hearts that are described in the Parable of the Sower may have truly been *saved*, it is clear that only one was committed enough to truly *serve*! The person who will move from the point of being merely saved to the point of being a true servant will be the person who “keeps” a firm hold of the teaching of God’s Word and will not allow the enemy, or the various *distractions* and *attractions* of this world, to choke out the kind of good growth that God wants to produce in their lives. In various translations, this word that is translated “keep” in the NKJV and other translations is also translated “hold it fast” or “hold on to it” in other versions of the New Testament. Notice that the kind of Christian that will “keep” God’s Word to the point of following Christ will be the Christian who exhibits “patience” (8:15) in their efforts to grow into all that God has for them.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Realize** that all believers are called into *fellowship* with Christ (salvation) but that only those who patiently hold fast to God’s Word will truly answer the call to *followship* (service) in their walk with Him. **Ask** God to empower you to be among “the 1 out of 4” who will fully commit to Him!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 8:26-39** | **DAY 25** |
| **Focus Verses: Luke 8:38 & 39** |

***A Story About “A Real Keeper”!***

The last two verses in the story of the man who was possessed by a “legion” of demons helps us to more fully understand what we earlier discussed about being a “keeper” of God’s Word. There are several evidences in the story of this man’s conversion that cause us to identify him as being one of those “keepers!” First, this man’s life was marked by a *departure* of his demons. Verse 38 defines him as “the man from whom the demons had *departed*.” He who had once been “bound with chains and shackles” (verse 29) was now completely set free from the even greater bondage to which his demons had held him. A second evidence of this man being a true “keeper” is found in his *desire* and *determination* to be with Jesus. Verse 38 also tells us that this man “*begged* Him (Jesus) that he might be with him.” The word that is translated “begged” here is translated “pray,” “beseech,” or “make request” in other places in the New Testament. His “desire” was to be “with” the One Who had made such a radical, redeeming change in his life. Those who “keep” God’s Word, and patiently grow thereby, are those who choose to spend time with Jesus and who desire to be “with Him” on an ongoing basis. Finally, this man’s life was obviously marked with a *devotion* to obedience. After the Lord’s command to “return” to his “own house and tell what great things God (had) done for him,” “he went his way and proclaimed throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him.”

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Note** that, even though this new Christian did not get “*his* way” when he asked to go with Jesus, he still went “*His* way” and obeyed the command of Christ! It is obvious that the prescription given to this man by the **Kingdom Physician** was just the medicine that he needed!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 8:40-56** | **DAY 26** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 8:41** |

***A Different Kind of “Begging”***

While it may not appear so in the English translation of the Bible, a look at the original language in which the New Testament was written teaches us that the “begging” that Jairus did when he asked the Lord to come to his house and heal his daughter was an entirely different type of “begging” than the formerly demon possessed man did when he “begged” Jesus to let him to go with him. The “begging” that the man who had been healed freed from his demon possession came from a word that expressed his *desire* to be with Jesus while the “begging” of the father mentioned in today’s story comes from a word that expressed the *desperation* of a father whose only daughter was dying. While the story of the demon possessed man indicates that we do not always receive what we *want* from the Lord, the story of this distraught father helps us to see that we often receive what we desperately *need* from Him. Just as we mentioned earlier in our devotional about the Lord “touching” the coffin of the widow’s dead son, a special “touch” is also a central part of today’s lesson. Upon reaching the home of the sick girl, and being told that she was dead, the Lord “took her by the hand” before telling her to “arise.” The Scripture saying that “her spirit returned” (verse 55) is a clear indication that she had indeed been dead. Even though her parents were “astonished” at this (verse 56) we should never be surprised by what Jesus can do even in the most desperate situations!

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Desperately** pray for the well-being of your children! **Believe** that the **Kingdom Physician** is the only “pediatrician” that can provide for their *spiritual* needs.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 9:1-17** | **DAY 27** |
| **Focus Verses: Luke 9:1** |

***“Ability” and “Authority”***

The word that is translated “power” in our focus verse is a word that denotes “ability.” When Jesus sent his disciples “to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick” (verse 2) He did so after providing them with the necessary means to accomplish this. Those of us who desire to be true ministers of God can be just as assured that our **Kingdom Physician** will also provide all that we need to be fully obedient to His commands. Along with His “power” (ability) the Lord also granted them His “authority.” Luke has more to say about this “power” than any other Gospel writer and he also had more to say about “authority” than any of the others. As a man trained in physical healing (don’t forget that Paul referred to Luke as a “physician” in Colossians 4:14), Dr. Luke was probably well aware of a doctor’s limited ability to bring healing in every situation. However, his repeated references to the “power and authority” that the Lord provided for His disciples must have made a lasting impression on his life. We have to remind ourselves that Luke was not one of the original disciples and that he was most probably saved under the ministry of the Apostle Paul. Whether or not Luke was saved under Paul’s ministry remains uncertain, but the fact that he entered the ministry under Paul’s leadership is quite clear from Luke’s own record in Acts 16. Verse 2 of today’s reading clearly indicates that our “ability” and “authority” to help others is associated with our willingness to “preach the kingdom of God” to those that we encounter along our way.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Commit** an appropriate amount of time to God’s Word and you will soon experience the presence of Christ in your ministry to others and **realize** that nothing empowers the Christian for service more than regular, daily doses of God’s Word.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 9:18-36** | **DAY 28** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 9:18** |

***Alone***

How sad it is to study about the times that Jesus was said to be “alone” and realize that the majority of those times that are associated with that word are times when he was praying! Matthew 14:23 first introduced us to this sad truth when we read that, “Jesus went up on the mountain *by Himself* to pray” and that “He was *alone* there.” Mark 6:46-47 tells us that, after Jesus instructed His disciples to go by boat to Bethsaida, “He departed to the mountain to pray…and (again) He was *alone.”* John’s record of this same event also mentions that Jesus was “alone” as He prayed (John 6:15). Perhaps there was no sadder indication of how Jesus was often left “alone” in this matter of prayer than when He, while earnestly praying in the Garden of Gethsemane, returned to find His disciples sleeping (Luke 22:44-45). For the record, there was at least one other situation in which, humanly speaking, Jesus was said to be “alone,” that being when He stood in defense of the woman who had been charged with adultery in John 8. But, note that I used the term “humanly speaking” in my previous statement. I did so because, while the Bible clearly teaches that man may have failed the great **Kingdom Physician** in this matter of His being left “alone”, He was never left “alone” by His heavenly Father. In John 16:32, Jesus told His disciples that, “Indeed the hour is coming…that you will be scattered…*and will leave me alone*. And yet *I am not alone*, because the Father is with me.”

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* Although we often describe our prayer time as “being alone with God,” we should **realize** that we are never truly “alone” after inviting Christ into our lives. **Join** Him in some prayer time today!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 9:37-48** | **DAY 29** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 9:47** |

***A Little Child***

Although most English translations contain the word “child” four times in the verses that we have read today, it is actually translated from two different Greek words. The first two times that it is used is in the story of the man with the sick child whom Jesus healed. In that situation, the word rendered “child” there is the same word that is used to describe the widow’s son that was raised from the dead in Luke 7 and the 12-year-old daughter of Jairus that we read about in Luke 8. The other times that we saw the word “child” in today’s reading (verses 46-47) it meant a “young child.” While some translations simply say “child” in these verses, they translate this same word “little child” or “young child” in 20 other places. The Lord used a “little child” as an object lesson to teach His disciples about humility after He overheard them arguing about who was the “greatest.” Two lessons were to come from Christ using this “little child.” The disciples were taught something about *peace*. *Peace* reigns *best* where *pride* reigns *least*. If they could learn to avoid pride they could more likely learn how to have peace among themselves. An additional lesson is found in Matthew’s record of the same event. There we find that Jesus, while using the “little child” to help Him teach about peace, also used the same opportunity to teach His disciples something about *protection* bystating that those who harmed one of His “little children” would have to answer directly to Him!

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Understand** that our **Kingdom Physician** desires that we be at peace with one another and that we “play fair” with one another by exhibiting humility to those around us. When we humble ourselves, we can **rest assured** that God will protect us from having others take advantage of us.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 9:49-62** | **DAY 30** |
| **Focus Verses: Luke 9:59 & 61** |

***“Me First!”***

In my opinion, two of the saddest words in the Bible are recorded in the response of the men mentioned in Luke 9:59 and 61! The last section of today’s Scripture deals with three unnamed individuals who all responded to the Lord in different ways. What might have sounded very spiritual to those who overheard these men proved to be nothing but empty promises to Jesus. Each one of them made verbal commitments to follow Christ, but two of them clearly indicated that they would do only on a “me first” basis! One said, “Lord, let *me first* go and bury my father” while the second said, “Lord…let *me first* go and bid them farewell who are at my house.” We should not think that Jesus was here prohibiting the first man from attending his father’s funeral because we know that the man was really saying, “Lord, when my earthly father is dead and gone, then I will obey my heavenly Father!” In the same sense, the second man was not being forbidden the opportunity to say a final farewell to his family because the Lord knew that this man was actually saying, “Lord, after I have fulfilled all of the other relationships in my life, then I will seek to please you!” How sad it is to realize that our **Kingdom Physician** still receives such responses from those who verbally pledge their loyalty to Him today. God’s churches are filled with people who are going to serve the Lord “one day” or “someday.” Even though the Holy Spirit chose to not reveal the names of these two men, you can rest assured that their “me first” attitude will not be forgotten on Judgment Day!

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Refuse** to serve the Lord on a “me first” basis. **Read** and then **meditate** on Matthew 6:33 today and **practice** “Seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness” in your daily walk. You may have many regrets at your life end, but living with a “God First” attitude will not be one of them!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 10:1-16** | **DAY 31** |
| **Focus Verses: Luke 10:13-15** |

***The “Capernaum Syndrome”***

I can vividly recall spending a full year travelling around the country preaching sermons from Matthew’s account of what Jesus stated in today’s focus verses! Where Luke states that Jesus included Capernaum among some cities that Jesus upbraided for their lack of repentance and respect for His Words and ministry, Matthew more fully explains the issues for which Capernaum was criticized. In Matthew 11:23, Jesus stated, “And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day!” While many of us associate certain cities in the Bible as being significant in the life of Christ, we seldom think of Capernaum as being one of them. However, the New Testament clearly teaches that Jesus once lived in Capernaum and treated it as the center of His earthly ministry. In Matthew 4:13, we read that “leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum.” Later, in Matthew 9:1, Capernaum is referred to as “His own city.” It was in Capernaum that the man was brought to Jesus on a cot and lowered down through the roof so that he could be healed. And, we should remember that in Luke 4:23, Jesus supposed that those who desired to see miracles probably wanted Him to duplicate what they had “heard done in Capernaum.” How sad it is that many who are most often blessed might have a tendency to most often take those blessings for granted!

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Pay attention** to all that God is doing in your life, home, and church, and then pay **respect** to Him by refusing to take His blessings for granted! **Avoid** the “Capernaum Syndrome” by expressing praise and appreciation to God on a regular basis.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 10:17-37** | **DAY 32** |
| **Focus Verses: Luke 10:23-24** |

***“Ditto!”***

When we consider what the disciples overheard Jesus saying about Capernaum, it might be that they possibly heard His saying “Ditto!” when He spoke the words recorded in our focus verses to them. In a private session with them, Jesus spoke to the disciples with words of *wisdom* and *warning*. The  *wisdom* was to be found in His disclosing to them how they were to be under His personal teaching, involved in His personal ministry, and exposed to all that they were seeing and hearing as He travelled among the cities and villages preaching the Gospel and healing people! It is always wise when Christians remain mindful of just how “blessed” they are. Even though the Greek word found here is most often translated “blessed” there are some places in the New Testament where it is translated “happy.” And, according to what Jesus is saying here, those who follow Him have great reason for considering themselves to be “blessed” and for being “happy.” Carefully note that Jesus did not just say that they were seeing things that “prophets and kings…desired to see” but things that “*many* prophets and kings” had desired to see! How sad it is when we fail to understand how blessed we are to be living in this age of the New Testament church!

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Enjoy** being a part of the New Testament church age and having the full knowledge of God that comes from reading and studying the Word of God. Our **Kingdom Physician** knows that a daily dose of expressed “appreciation” will cause our blessings to “appreciate” in value to us!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 10:38-11:13** | **DAY 33** |
| **Focus Verses: Luke 11:2-4** |

***A Model for Prayer***

In order to fully understand the Lord’s response contained in our focus verses, we have to first understand the disciples’ question that is contained in the preceding verse. When we carefully examine the request, “Lord teach us to pray” we will see that these men were not asking Jesus to teach them “what” to pray but “how” to pray. Because of that, we understand that Jesus was not telling the disciples that they were to recite this same prayer to Him every time that they prayed, but, rather, that they were follow this specific pattern so that might pray in a more organized and orderly fashion. When I was a very young Christian, my pastor taught me to pray by using a very simple memory tool. He suggested that I think about ACTS when I prayed and remember to begins with **Adoration**, then follow that time of praise with a time of **Confession** and **Thanksgiving** before mentioning my **Supplications** (requests) to God. You might interpret the model that Jesus gave to His disciples in this way: *Praise* – Our Father in Heaven, hallowed by your name.” *Purpose* – “Your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.” *Provision* – “Give us day by day our daily bread.” *Pardon* – “And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us.” *Protection* – “And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.”

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Commit** time to prayer on a daily basis. **Seek** to pray in an organized fashion and **use** whatever tool is available that will help you to **stay on track** in your conversations with God. **Pray** specifically for someone today and then **let them know** that you have done so.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 11:14-28** | **DAY 34** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 11:28** |

***A “Not So Secret” Formula for Blessing***

I used the phrase “Not So Secret” in this devotion title because of the numerous times in the Gospels that our **Kingdom Physician** prescribed “hearing” and “keeping” His Word for those who truly desire to experience His greatest blessings in their lives. Both the “hear” and the “keep” come from the same root word that means much the same as the words “hear” and “keep” as Jesus used them in the Parable of the Sower. If you remember that parable in Luke 8, Jesus spoke of those believer’s that became fruitful as those who “having heard the Word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience” (Luke 8:15). And do you recall what we read in Luke 6:47-48? There Jesus revealed this formula for success when He said, “Whoever comes to Me, and *hears* My sayings and *does* them, I will show you whom he is like: He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock.” Time will not allow me to cite or quote every place where Jesus urged His believers to employ this formula in their quest for spiritual development and success. Just be advised that what the **Kingdom Physician** prescribed for spiritual success in that day is exactly the same thing that He prescribes for those who follow Him today.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* I simply cannot emphasize enough the importance that daily Bible reading and obedience play in the lives of those who desire to be *faithful* and *fruitful* in their personal life and ministry. **Remember** this saying: “What you do with the Bible will determine what God can do with you!” **Use** your Bible as a daily guide and see if you do not soon find God using you to minister to others.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 11:29-41** | **DAY 35** |
| **Focus Verses: Luke 11:29 & 30** |

***“The Sign of Jonah”***

When Jesus spoke about those who rejected Him as seeking “a sign” He was saying that, even after all that they had seen and heard, they were still demanding “proof” that He was Who He declared Himself to be. Jesus warned them that there was a soon-to-come “sign” that would deliver all of the evidence needed for anyone to fully understand Who He was and why He came into the world. The sign that He was speaking of was “the sign of Jonah the prophet.” Anyone who has any familiarity at all with the Bible recalls that Jonah was the prophet who was once swallowed up in death but then delivered by the mighty power of God! After that prophets “resurrection” from the belly of the whale, he went to the godless city of Nineveh and the entire city repented after hearing his message. There is no question that Jesus is here foretelling His own death, burial, and resurrection and declaring it to be the ultimate proof that He truly was the Son of God! His comparing the Pharisees with the people of Nineveh must have been quite offensive to them. They, no doubt, must have realized that He was clearly saying that the people of Nineveh (heathens in the eyes of the Jews) repented of their evil ways ([Jonah 3:4-10](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Jonah%203.4-10)) after hearing the message from God’s Word, while the Pharisees continued in their disbelief despite being eyewitnesses to the miracles of Jesus.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Cease** to be a sign *seeker* and **begin** to be a sign *speaker* as you learn to witness about Christ and His saving power to those you encounter along life’s way! As was the case with the Pharisees, not everyone will believe. However, you might be greatly surprised at the many people who will.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 11:42-54** | **DAY 36** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 11:42** |

***Jesus Endorsed Tithing!***

It is often stated that “tithing” was an Old Testament responsibility. However, today’s focus verse is, in full, a direct quotation of Jesus. If you are reading from a “red letter edition” (where every direct quote from Christ is printed in red) then you have read “red” words in most of today’s entire Scripture section, and nothing but red words in verse 42. In our day of “sound bites” and “putting a spin” on what people said, one often notices that some “reports” are based entirely on phrases that have been taken out of context. However, there is a very important phrase in today’s reading that many people seem to read over and never really notice. As Jesus was speaking to the Pharisees about the meticulous attention that they paid to adhering to the Law, He mentioned the careful attention that they paid to making sure that they tithed (gave a minimum of one-tenth) on everything that they had. It seems that they were careful even to give a tenth of their spices! Jesus found it rather amazing that people could be so disciplined about giving and yet fail to fully obey God’s teachings on “justice and the love of God.” When it came to the matter of being careful about giving the full tenth to God, Jesus said, “These you ought to have done” and then added “without leaving the others undone.” The **Kingdom Physician’s** “diagnosis” was that the Pharisees should continue to faithfully tithe but that their tithing was not going to buy their way out of obeying God fully in other areas of spiritual importance.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Thank** God for your income! **Ask** Him to help you manage your money in such a way that you can honor Him faithfully with the tithe and still have some to give offerings to other special needs.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 12:1-12** | **DAY 37** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 12:6** |

***The “5th” Sparrow?***

Luke 12:6 has been of particular interest to me of late, and I have spent a few weeks meditating on this verse in hope of coming to a better understanding of it. The verse begins with Jesus asking a question and concludes with Him making a very definite statement. The question was, “Are not five sparrows sold for two copper coins?” The question establishes the value that the people of New Testament times placed on a sparrow. When you consider Matthew 10:29, and the fact that there we are told that, “two sparrows sold for a (one) copper coin,” then you have to assume that an extra sparrow was thrown in for good measure when you bought four. As such, you might say that the “5th” sparrow was free, and as such, would seem to have no value at all. In a sense, God is telling us that He places great value on things (or people) that we might assume to be of no value at all. I recently read that a sparrow was the cheapest thing sold in the ancient marketplace. Considering the fact that the coin that was required to purchase *two of them* was the smallest coin minted by the Roman government, and that it also was the coin of the lowest value of all of the coins mentioned in the Bible, then we have to assume that statement to be true. The Lord’s concluding statement was, “And not one of them is forgotten before God.” What is the **Kingdom Physician** trying to tell us here? I think that He wants us to know that He places great value on even the “5th” sparrow that was thrown in for free and that He is always mindful of its needs. Certainly we can rest assured that He sees great value in each and every one of us!

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Read** Psalm 50:10-11; 113:5-6; 14516; and 147:9 and see how much God cares for all of His creations. **Consider** the price that He paid for our redemption and believe that we are of great value to Him.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 12:13-23** | **DAY 38** |
| **Focus Verses: Luke 12:16-19** |

***A Real “I” Problem!***

No matter the translation, you will count multiple usages of the pronouns “I” and “my” in the parable of the man who was cursed with what I call “the bigger barn syndrome.” In the NKJV you will find the pronoun “I” six times in this very short speech. Since the number six is closely associated with “man” throughout the New Testament, then we have to assume that the kind of self-centeredness that is described here may be something to which all mankind may be susceptible. Every time that I read these verses, I always remember the rebellious words that were uttered by Satan just before his fall. They are found in Isaiah 14:13-14: “I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.” That kind of mentality did not result in anything but ruin for Lucifer and we can rest assured that it will not do us much good either! The repeated usage of the pronoun “my” helps us to see how easy it is for anyone to think that we can claim ownership to anything in this world. The Bible clearly teaches us that we are only stewards of our material possessions and that it all really belongs to God. As such, to think that “I” can make decisions about what to do with “my” material possessions without consulting God is to have a very arrogant and prideful attitude.

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Ask** the **Kingdom Physician** to cure your “I” problems at your next appointment! **Invite** God to be your “business partner” and **include** Him in all of your financial endeavors.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 12:24-44** | **DAY 39** |
| **Focus Verse: Luke 12:33** |

***Treasure in the Heavens***

It is possible that the word “treasure,” at least as it is used in the New Testament, is one of the most misunderstood words in the Bible. The reference here is not simply to money, or other things of material value, but to the coffers or chests in which things of great value were safely stored. For instance, the first time that this word is used in the New Testament is in Matthew 2:11, where we read that the Magi entered the house where the infant Jesus lived and then “they had opened their treasures” and “they presented gifts to Him.” In Matthew 12:35, Jesus spoke of how “A good man *out of* the treasure of his heart brings forth good things.” The implication here is clearly that the “treasure” was the man’s heart and that the “good things” were kept in that treasury. In Matthew 13:52, Jesus taught about “a householder who brings *out of* his treasure things new and old.” It should come to no surprise to us that the former tax collector, Matthew, had more to say about “treasure” than any other Gospel writer. As a matter of fact, Matthew had twice as much to say about “treasure” than all of the other Gospel writers combined! The Lord wanted people to understand that the things that we give to Him are safely kept for us in Heaven. Is your box empty or full?

**Prayer Emphasis:**

* **Give** faithfully to God’s work and **invest** your money in eternal things. **Visualize** everything that you give to God as being stored up for you in Heaven. **Learn** to prefer having “treasure in the heavens” over “pleasure in this world” and you will surely experience great joy!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Reading: Luke 12:45-59** | **DAY 40** |
| **Focus Verses: Luke 12:51-53** |

***Division***

It must have been quite a surprise when Jesus stated that He had not come to bring peace on earth, but division! And the extent of the division which He stated that He was going to bring must have been quite shocking! The division that He was going to bring was going to rock even the greatest stronghold of all creation – family! The fact that He stated that this division would cause “three against two” and “two against three” gives us the idea that those who closely followed Jesus were going to find that they would probably have some irreconcilable differences with others. I can imagine no closer bond that that of a father and his son or a mother and her daughter. However, Jesus stated that “Father will be divided against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother.” Typically the closest human bonds are found within the family. Since our faith in Christ requires that our ultimate allegiance be to Him, there can be no allegiance to any other person that might challenge our faithfulness to Him. One cannot help but notice that there will be division between authority figures (fathers and mothers) and those who should be subject to them (sons and daughters). Jesus was clearly warning that a time was coming when there would have to be clear-cut decisions about whether His follower’s relationship to Him was of more importance than any other relationship in life. It was a tough decision for those who lived in that day and it remains a tough decision even now.

**Prayer** **Emphasis:**

* Thankyou for walking through this first part 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 to learn how you can have a personal relationship with the **Kingdom Physician**!