

Daily Devotionals: With Jesus and His Wisdom | March 13, 2022

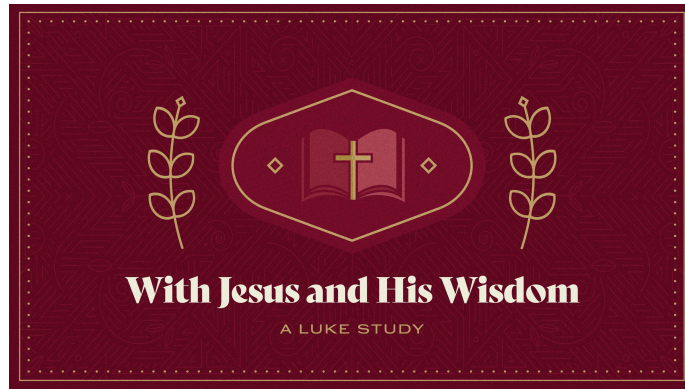
Day 1 – Devotion

This week we are going to spend time in **Luke 15**. We can gain a lot by repeated reading of Scripture. Take some time to read the three parables found in this chapter (**Luke 15:1-32**). After that, read the rest of today's devotion.

As we go throughout our lives, it is for us to get bogged down by our routines, responsibilities and the stresses of life. Regardless of our season of life, our lives are full of activity and busyness. We can even wear the busyness as a badge of honor, as it dominates many of our conversations in our families, work, church and friendships. This busyness can create in us a tunnel vision where it is difficult to see beyond our immediate circumstances.

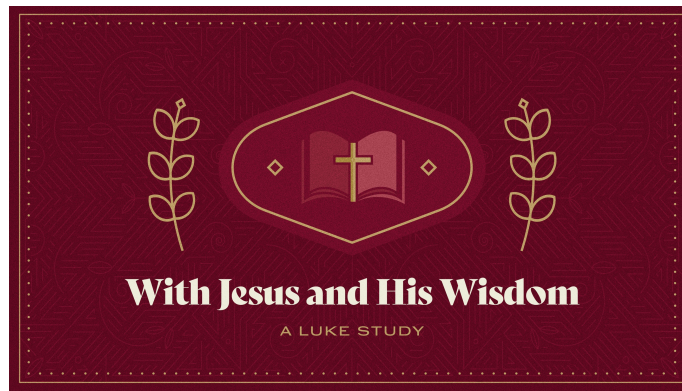
In order for us to be shaped more into the image of Jesus, we need to see the world as he does. During Jesus's three years of ministry, he was constantly busy with people following him, listening to his teaching and asking for the miracles and healings he performed as he traveled. There were challenges and opposition, and no lack of misunderstanding from the crowds who wanted Jesus to be the king that fit their own desires. Even in the midst of the busyness of his life, Jesus was never overwhelmed by this and he always had the proper perspective on his life and the life of those around him. Instead of the tunnel vision we often experience, he had a Kingdom perspective of the eternal ramifications of what he was doing and how it impacted every person he came across.

As we read and reflect this week, we are going to gain a deeper understanding of how God views those who are lost or far from Him. As Christians, we are called to be in the world and engage with those who do not have a relationship with Jesus, sharing our faith to make and build up disciples of Jesus. If we constantly have blinders on where we are focused on what is immediately in front of us, we will miss opportunities to show compassion and share the hope of Jesus with those in our life. If we have a Kingdom and eternal perspective like Jesus, we will recognize the weight of this responsibility, and our other cares will pale in comparison.



Questions for reflection:

1. As you go throughout your day, how would you describe your perspective on the world?
2. How can you move to a perspective that is focused on the Kingdom and eternity?
3. Who in your life is far from God that you could share the hope of Jesus with?



Day 2 – Bible study breakdown

Today you are going to re-read **Luke 15** where Jesus tells three parables about lost and wayward things and people. While there is definite overlap in the theme of these parables, pay close attention to Jesus’s words and think through the questions before, during and after you read.

When you read **Luke 15:1-10** you will read two parables, the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin. As you read, think about the following questions. Then, in the space below, jot down your answers.

- As the crowd gathers to listen to Jesus, who is there?
- Who do you think Jesus is speaking to in these parables?
- Is the message the same for everyone?
- What is common across these parables? What is different? What do you think Jesus is talking about?

Luke 15:1-10

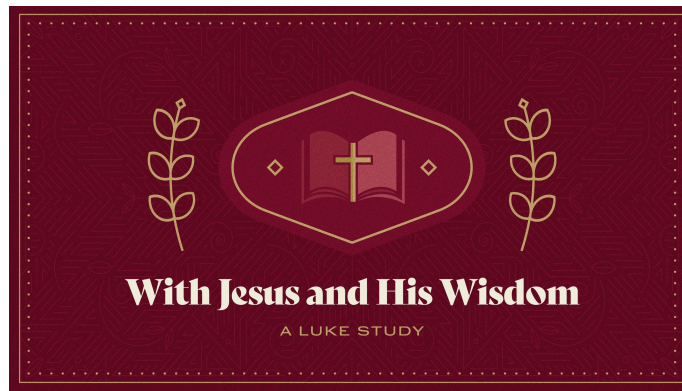
The Parable of the Lost Sheep

Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. **2** But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.” **3** Then Jesus told them this parable: **4** “Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn’t he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? **5** And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders **6** and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.’ **7** I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

The Parable of the Lost Coin

8 “Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins[a] and loses one. Doesn’t she light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? **9** And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.’ **10** In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

Now you are going to read one of Jesus’s most well-known parables, the Parable of the Prodigal Son. This parable also deals with something of great value that is lost, but there is much more



detail and characters than the previous two. As you read, think about the following questions. Then, in the space below, jot down your answers.

1. Thinking back to the crowd Jesus is addressing, what do you think Jesus is saying to these different groups based on the different people in the parable?
2. What is Jesus teaching about God in this parable?
3. Reflect on this image of a loving and compassionate father in this parable and how you see God.

The Parable of the Prodigal Son

11 Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons. **12** The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them.

13 “Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. **14** After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. **15** So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. **16** He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

17 “When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! **18** I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. **19** I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.’ **20** So he got up and went to his father.

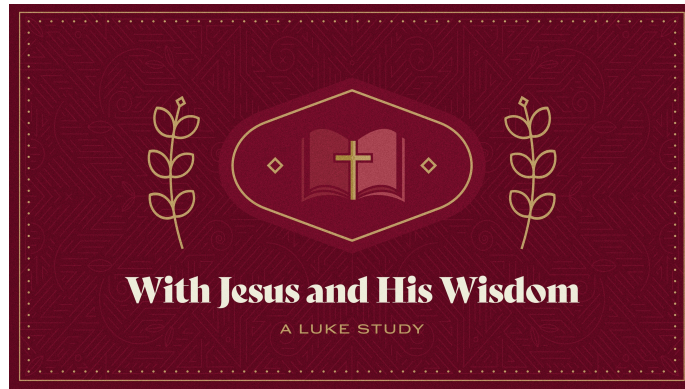
“But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

21 “The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’

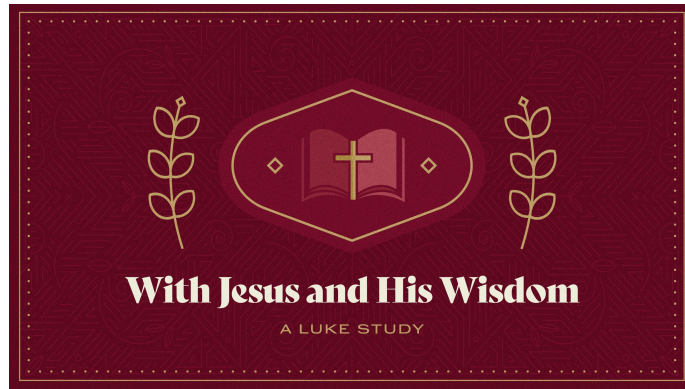
22 “But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. **23** Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. **24** For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.

25 “Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. **26** So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. **27** ‘Your brother has come,’ he replied, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’

28 “The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. **29** But he answered his father, ‘Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. **30** But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’



31 “‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. **32** But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’”



Day 3 – Scripture Survey

As we come to Day 3 of our devotionals, let's look at other places in Scripture where we can see God's pursuit of those far from Him and our role in sharing Jesus. As you read these passages assigned for today, answer the following questions:

1. What do these passages reveal about God's heart for people who do not have a relationship with Him?
2. What is our role in the process of coming into relationship with God through Jesus?

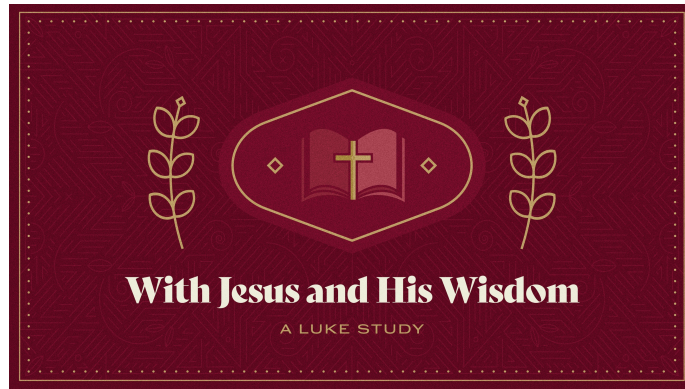
Genesis 12:1-3

Isaiah 56:7

Matthew 28:18-20

2 Corinthians 5:20

Revelation 7:9-10

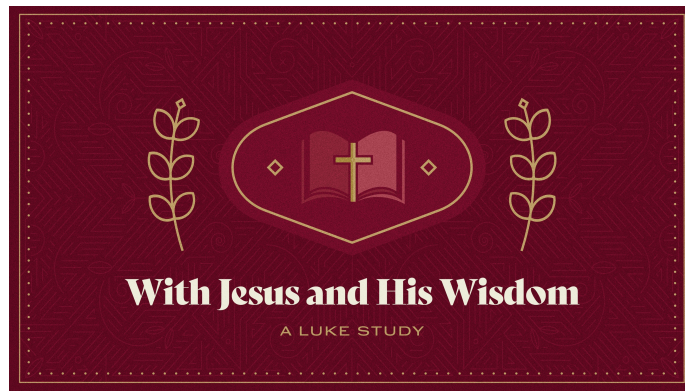


Day 4 – Story Work

This week we have been thinking about God’s heart from those far from him and how we can share our faith with others. Today, you are going to do some reflection on your own journey in faith and the roles that others played in you coming to faith in Jesus. Our prayer is that we can express deep gratitude for the faithfulness of others and how God has walked with us whether we knew Him at the time or not.

Spend a few minutes in prayer thanking God for the people in your life that played a major role in you putting your faith in Jesus and helping you to grow in your faith.

1. Who are these people? What did they do that had an impact on your life?
2. How was God pursuing you and faithful to you even before you knew him?
3. If you have not already, think about your story and how your story is worth sharing with others who do not know God. If you have shared your story of coming to faith, reflect back on how you shared that and think about ways you can continue to share it.



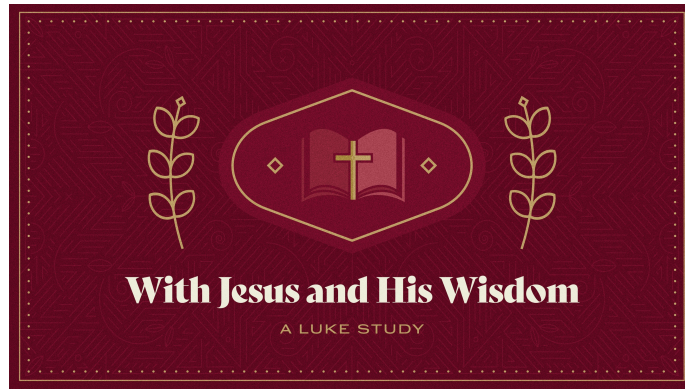
Day 5 – Application

We have spent the week thinking about the topic of evangelism and how God has a strong desire for those who do not know Him to come into a relationship with Him and how we have a role in this process. We read three parables of Jesus that illustrate the heart of the Father for the lost, and I know that many of us can strongly relate to this feeling of being lost and now being found. We read multiple verses throughout the Bible that show God’s desire for people to know Him, God’s plan to bless all people and for all people to worship Him, along with our responsibility as Christians to share the Gospel of Jesus to take part in accomplishing these goals. We then spent some time reflecting on our own lives and the roles of others in bringing us to a relationship with God, and expressing gratitude to God for these people and God’s own pursuit of us when we were far away.

The last thing to do this week is to think about how to put this into action. Evangelism is something we are called to do as Christians, but it is not something that is common. Too often, we can allow doubt, our perceived lack of knowledge or words to say, or a general desire to avoid discomfort to keep us from entering into relationships and conversations for the sake of sharing the Gospel. The challenge for us is to put this into action regardless of what we think about our abilities in this area, social fears, or any other detracting thoughts. We know that placing faith in Jesus and following Him is the greatest gift in our lives, and it frankly is selfish and simple minded to keep it to ourselves. If we have a Kingdom and eternal perspective, these relationships and conversations are something we should be engaging in regularly.

What is God inviting you to do after spending time with these devotionals this week? Here are some specific things for you to do this week.

- **Pray** – Pray for those in your life who are far from God. Pray for opportunity to build relationships with them. If you do not have anyone that comes to mind, you should also pray for God to show you people and to expand your circle beyond only Christians so that you will have these opportunities.
- **Pray continually** – Committing to pray for people in our lives for a long period of time is incredibly powerful as you invite the Holy Spirit to work in your life and theirs, and it changes your own perspective on these individuals to have a more eternal view, and not the tunnel vision we so often have.



- **Invite Your Community In** – Share who you are praying for with your life group so they can join you in prayer, offer encouragement and ideas on how to connect with these people, and inviting the people you are praying for to social gatherings with others from your life group can be an effective way to build these relationships as well.

Our prayer is that you are compelled to share your faith with others as you intentionally move into relationships with those who are far from God, not because it is just what you are supposed to do, but because it reflects the heart of God and it follows the example of Jesus. If we are to follow Jesus, we are to live like Him, and He consistently made space and saw people with a true perspective and was able to share His hope with them. We are to do likewise.