

# The Gospel According to St. Luke

## Middle school Ministry



# Introduction

**The 4 Gospels comparison**

	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
To whom it was written	Jews	Romans	Greeks	Christians
Subject	The Messiah the king	The Messiah the conqueror of Satan	Christ the lover of mankind	Christ the Incarnate Word
Main message of Jesus	Fulfills the Law	Performs wonders	Saves mankind	Dwells among us
Gospel content	Focuses on prophecies	Focuses on deeds	Focused on history	Focused on theology
Symbol	The human face	The lion	The Ox	The Eagle

**Symbols of the Four Gospels**

Matthew Winged Man      Mark Winged Lion      Luke Winged Ox      John Eagle

## 1- Servant's preparation:

- 1) Explanation of the gospel of St Luke chapters 1-12 and an introduction for Bishop Yousef  
<https://www.suscopts.org/diocese/bishop/bible-study/holy-gospel-according-to-st-luke/>
- 2) A link for Fr. Doud Lamei 's bible study in Arabic  
[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLHedjI0\\_e2nk5yEwV9kLxOBn-oJwCt5OK](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLHedjI0_e2nk5yEwV9kLxOBn-oJwCt5OK)
- 3) The reference book for Fr. Tadros Malaty → see separate attachment
- 4) Upper room app → Sermons → Bible study → Luke , you will find sermons for each chapter, links provided at the beginning of each lesson below.
- 4) Two illustrative videos that could be used by servants to prepare or to show at the beginning of each unit.
  - Part 1 [chapter 1-9]  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XIb\\_dClxzo0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XIb_dClxzo0)
  - Part 2 [10-24]  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=26z\\_KhwNdd8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=26z_KhwNdd8)

## 2- Book introduction:



### A- Who is St. Luke?

- ❖ The word “Luke” is probably an abbreviation of the Latin word “Lucanus” or “Lucuis”, which means ‘the carrier of the light’ or ‘the enlightened’.
- ❖ He is the only one among the writers for the Testament who was not a Jew, but a Gentile
- ❖ St. Luke was a doctor, a painter, and a Gentile from Antioch. He accepted Christianity at the hands of St. Paul the apostle and became his companion on his numerous journeys.
- ❖ He met St. Paul on his second missionary journey in Troas and accompanied him to Philippi. Then, he joined him again on his third journey heading to Jerusalem. It appears that he may have stayed in Palestine during the two years’ imprisonment of St. Paul in Caesarea. They also travelled to preach in Rome together (Acts 28:30).
- ❖ He was not one of the disciples, nor one of the apostles.
- ❖ It came by oral tradition that he had painted the first picture of the Virgin Mary.
- ❖ He departed in Bithynia at an old age. Some say that he was martyred during the reign of Nero at age 84.

### B- Characteristics:

- ❖ He wrote this Gospel and the Book of Acts to an Alexandrian nobleman named **Theophilus** (Luke 1:3), calling him “most excellent”, which is a special title for one who holds an important position within the Roman Empire. Some say that Theophilus is one of these three:
  1. He might be someone whose name the apostles did not want to mention, instead, calling him Theophilus which means ‘he who loves God’ in order not to reveal his identity and cause him harm.
  2. Or someone who truly bore this name. The apostle wrote him the Gospel of truth (the Gospel of St. Luke) to understand the Church and its mission (the Acts), in order to attract him to the faith rather than resist the Church.
  3. Luke was a doctor and a servant; he may have treated his own master before setting him free. In order to show his gratitude and give the most precious thing he could offer; he wrote him the gospel of our Lord Jesus and the history of the first Church
- ❖ St Luke did not meet Jesus in person but believed later when he met St Paul. In order to record accurate details about the whole story of Jesus, he interviewed eyewitnesses like St Mary and the disciples and may be main characters he wrote about like the Samaritan and Zacchaeus to be able to collect accurate and reliable understanding of all things and document them for all generations in a perfectly historical way.
- ❖ Picture a scientist going about some great work. He or she is searching for the cure for some horrible disease or making some marvelous new discovery. First the scientist digs for facts, looking deeply, studying carefully, investigating every clue, relentlessly hunting for any and every fact that will make the discovery deeper, richer, and more accurate.

- ❖ Similarly, in this study, we are going to look at Jesus through the eyes of those who actually witnessed Him, and then told their story. That is what a witness is: a person who sees or experiences something, then tells others what he or she has seen.

### C- The Time for his writing

- There is no sure tradition regarding the time of this writing or its site. St. Irianus thinks it was written before the martyrdom of St. Paul.
- Since the gospel was written before the book of Acts, and the book of Acts was written before the martyrdom of St. Paul the apostle, therefore many believe that it was written between the **year 63 and 67 AD.**

### D- Its Aim:

- ❖ ***This Gospel was recorded for the Greeks***, who are known for their own philosophy and literature, which is why it was written in a refined and poetic style.
- ❖ ***He offered Jesus to the Greeks as a Lover of mankind***, who cares for the educated and uneducated, the philosopher and the unwise, the rich and the poor, the Jew and the Gentile, the man, the woman and the child. St. Luke presented Christ to the Gentile world as a Mean to find their inner happiness and joy. He began the Gospel with joy with announcing [the birth of Jesus] and concluded it with joy [Jesus rose from the dead]; something the Greek legends and philosophies lacked.
- ❖ Jesus Christ came as a Friend to support us; praying in many places: (3:21; 6:12; 9:18, 29; 22:39-46), and teaching about praying (Our salvation is not philosophy).



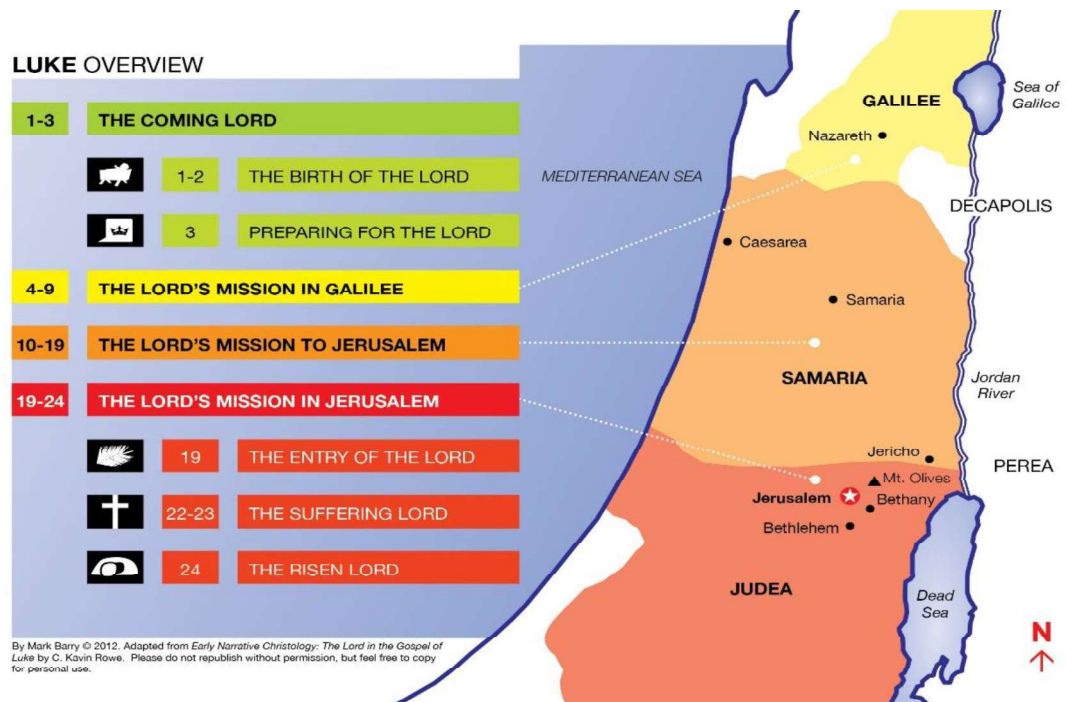
### E- Why do we symbolize this gospel as an OX?

The ox associated with the Gospel of Luke fits well since it speaks to the great sacrifice of Jesus, and the ox was an important animal for sacrifice as required in the Torah.

### 3- Book outline

Its sections:

1. Unit 1: Our Friend became like us and was tempted like us, **chapters 1-4**
2. Unit 2: Our Friend feels our suffering, **chapters 5-18**
3. Unit 3: Our faithful Friend, **chapters 19-23**
4. Unit 4: Our Friend, the Risen from the dead, **chapter 24**



## Unit 1: [3 lessons]

### Our Friend became like us and was tempted like us chapters 1-4

St Luke presents the Son of God as a Friend, One that we can befriend not fear.

1. Introduction (**Chapter 1** v 1-4).
2. The promise of the Baptist to Zachariah and Elizabeth (v.5-25).
3. Meeting Elizabeth (v.26-38).
4. The birth of John (v.57-80).
5. The birth of Christ (**Chapter 2**)
6. The shepherds meet Him (v.8-20).
7. The circumcision of Jesus (v.21).
8. His entrance to the temple (v.22-40).
9. Jesus challenging the Jewish elders (v.41-52).
10. His baptism (**Chapter 3**) and the genealogy of Christ (v.23-37).
11. Jesus was tempted before beginning His ministry at Galilee (**Chapter 4**)

# Chapter 1

## Servant's preparation:

A sermon from Upper room app bible study about chapter 1

<https://subsplash.com/upperroommedia/lb/mi/+nkahjgy>

## Brief introduction:

At the beginning of each lesson, please mention this book overview.

- ✓ Who is St. Luke? He was a doctor, a painter, and a Gentile from Antioch. He accepted Christianity at the hands of St. Paul the apostle later after resurrection.
- ✓ Who did he write his gospel to? The Greek after collecting testimonies from eyewitnesses to accurately record all details of Jesus's life.
- ✓ What is the main message of the book? ***St Luke offered Jesus to the Greeks as a Lover of mankind***, who cares for the educated and uneducated, the philosopher and the unwise, the rich and the poor, the Jew and the Gentile, the man, the woman and the child.

## Main points in the Chapter:

1. An introduction to the book 1-4
2. The good news to Zacharias of John's birth 5-17
3. Zacharias' dumbness 18-25
4. The Annunciation of the Divine Incarnation 26-38
5. Mary's Encounter with Elizabeth 39-45
6. The Virgin's hymn of Praise 46-56
7. John's Birth and the Circumcision 57-66
8. Zacharias the priest's Prophecy 67-80

## Lesson overview:

Please go over main events of the chapter briefly as follows

The gospel of St. Luke started with a short introduction that mentioned how, why and to whom was the book written. We explained that in the previous introduction.

### **John the Baptist's birth: 1-25**

- Because St. Luke was a man of science, being a physician, he clearly defined the date of the event of John's birth
- Even though that time, there was corruption and there were no prophecies for 3 centuries, God saw Zacharias and Elizabeth, noticed their righteousness, and honored them to get John the forerunner before the Christ.

- In this conversation that occurred between the archangel Gabriel and Zacharias the priest inside the Altar, we notice that Zacharias did not believe the angel's words, in spite of seeing the angel and listening to the angelic voice in a tangible way which made him blameworthy of it, particularly because the holy history mentions living examples of elderly people who begot children whereas their wives was barren, such as Sarah, Abraham's wife for not having children.
- In (Luke 1: 17) "And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah". The Scholar Oreganus comments on this statement saying, "He did not say in the soul of Elijah, but rather 'in the spirit of Elijah and his power'. The spirit that dwelt in Elijah also dwelt in John, and the power in Elijah was also in John.
- The archangel declared himself that he is Gabriel, he came carrying the divine promise and the good news, but he also had to discipline Zacchaeus with dumbness as God commanded.

### **The Annunciation of the Divine Incarnation 26-38**

- God chose a virgin who is betrothed to a man [engaged but for the Jews, it is like married without physical union]. God's choice was perfect because Jesus had to come from a virgin but if she were seen pregnant without being married, people would stone her thinking she was a sinner.
- The Holy Spirit came on her to sanctify her womb and start her conception, this happened the minute she agreed to accepting the assignment of being the mother of God. Her obedience opposes Eve's disobedience. She was more obedient than Zacchaeus who questioned the angel.

### **Mary's Encounter with Elizabeth 39-45.**

- The virgin St. Mary has now carried in herself He who carries the burdens of the world, and He who provides for everything, she did not worry about what is hers, but rather in the receiving spirit, she hastened to the hills to the city of Judah, so as to serve Elizabeth.

### **The Virgin's Hymn of Praise 46-56**

- When Elizabeth's tongue was released in blessings to the Virgin because she has believed the promises and has carried the Word of God in her womb; likewise did the Virgin's tongue began do praise God.

### **John's Birth and the Circumcision 57-66**

- John's birth became a preaching sermon, though it had begun mysteriously, but the Lord has become a companion to him so as to support him; for God took John to the wilderness while young, and there He took care of him and raised him, so that he appears to Israel at the appropriate due time.

### **Goal we learn: [Submit to God's will]**

In this chapter, we have many points to learn from, but we will focus on St Mary and her submissive response to the angel. **"Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word."** Luke 1:38



## Chapter 15 & 16

### Servant's preparation:

A sermon from upper room app about Luke 15

<https://subsplash.com/upperroommedia/lb/mi/+b9c2htg>

Luke 16:

<https://subsplash.com/upperroommedia/lb/mi/+hyr2dzx>

<https://subsplash.com/upperroommedia/media/mi/+sz2bcj4>

### Brief introduction:

At the beginning of each lesson, please mention this book overview.

- ✓ Who is St. Luke? He was a doctor, a painter, and a Gentile from Antioch. He accepted Christianity at the hands of St. Paul the apostle later after resurrection.
- ✓ Who did he write his gospel to? The Greek after collecting testimonies from eyewitnesses to accurately record all details of Jesus's life.
- ✓ What is the main message of the book? ***St Luke offered Jesus to the Greeks as a Lover of mankind***, who cares for the educated and uneducated, the philosopher and the unwise, the rich and the poor, the Jew and the Gentile, the man, the woman and the child.

### Remember:

Last lesson we talked about the parable of the banquet and how God felt when He invited many people to an amazing party [heaven] but every day He would see people making up excuses not to go. Jesus explained that the gate is narrow, and the path is not easy, that is why the first would be last and the last would go first. God prepared for us incredible things in heaven. He wanted each of us there with him.

Let us accept His invitation and come with full energy to His feast at liturgy, knowing it is a mean to get us closer to Him. Let us try to drop anything that could disqualify us from being one of His welcomed guests in heaven.

### Main points in the Chapter 15:

1. The parable of the lost sheep 1- 7
2. The parable of the missing coin 8- 10
3. The parable of the prodigal son 11- 32.

### Main points in the Chapter 16:

- 1- The parable of the dishonest manager 1- 13
- 2- The divine fellowship and the love of money 14- 15
- 3- The divine fellowship and the difficult commandment 16- 18



#### 4- The parable of Lazarus and the rich man 19-31

### Lesson overview:

Please go over main events of the chapter briefly as follows:

In chapter 15, St. Luke mentioned those three consecutive parables: the lost sheep that is found, the missing coin that is found, and the lost son who was dead and has lived. The evangelist wished to motivate us with this triple medication to obtain the healing of our wounds, for the braided triple cord is not cut easily. Who are these three? The father, the shepherd, and the woman? The father is God, the Father, the shepherd is Jesus Christ, and the woman is the church.

However, God's love has to be met with love if humans choose wisely. God actually created human as a master who has a perfect free will of his own. He could accept this fellowship or reject it. Now, the Lord offers us two parables in chapter 16 that urge us to take by force His friendship of our own free will. These are the parables of the dishonest manager, and the parable of Lazarus and the rich man.



### The 3 parables in chapter 15:

- ❖ After His dinner with the Pharisees, Jesus went back to His usual companions: "tax collectors and 'sinners'" (15:1). This made the religious leaders complain about Jesus' associations. Their criticism prompted the three parables of Chapter 15. These parables comprise some of the best known and most loved verses in the New Testament.
- ❖ All three parables deal with the same theme: concern over the lost.
- ❖ The first parable (vv. 3-7) is about the shepherd who leaves his 99 sheep in order to find the one lost sheep. Even though this story has been surrounded with sentimentalism by songs and poems, its message is still clear. Although the shepherd loved the 99-safe sheep, his primary attention was given

to the one that was lost. Any parent who has lost a child in a shopping mall can understand that kind of attention, as well as the exhilaration the shepherd felt upon finding the lost sheep.

- ❖ In the second parable (vv. 8-10) a woman loses one of her coins from her small collection and turns her humble house upside-down looking for it. She, too, greatly rejoices at finding the lost item.
- ❖ One of the best loved of Jesus' parables is the third one in this series, the parable of the "Prodigal Son" (vv. 11-32). The younger son takes his share of the inheritance, squanders it in riotous living, returns home with his head bowed, and is honored by his loving father. While we all appreciate the message of paternal love and forgiveness, don't miss out on the message that places this parable with the other two in this chapter. The father had two sons, and while he loved the older son no less, his joy at the return of the "lost" son was boundless.
- ❖ The 99 sheep and the nine coins do not have voices in the first two parables. But the older brother in the third parable does, and he voices his jealousy at all the fuss over his younger sibling's return.
- ❖ Certainly, his complaint is logical. What he says in verses 29-30 cannot be disputed. But it sounds much like what the Pharisees and other religious leaders were saying in 15:2. And that, of course, was Jesus' point in telling the parable.
- ❖ Had the older son been as concerned about his brother as his father was, he too would be rejoicing at the boy's return. In fact, he probably would have been out looking for the lost brother some time ago!
- ❖ The message of these three parables is clear. Certainly, God loves every one of His children and is concerned about the well-being of each and every Christian. But there is no denying the special place in God's heart for those who are outside the Kingdom. They are God's concern, and they should be the Church's first priority.

### **The parable of the dishonest manager Chapter 16:1- 13**

- ❖ At first glance Jesus seems to be praising dishonesty in this parable!
- ❖ The master referred to in 16:1-8 was probably a landowner who rented parcels of land to tenant farmers in exchange for a percentage of their harvest. (That's why their debt to him was in quantities of olive oil and wheat.) But this master was what we sometimes call an "absentee landlord." He either lived too far away or was too busy to manage the land himself, so he hired a manager to take care of the daily business. (Just like the owner of an apartment building usually hires a manager to rent the apartments, maintain the building, collect the rents, etc.)
- ❖ Apparently, the manager in the story was not honest, skimming some of his master's profits.
- ❖ When the master found out about it and called the manager to account, the manager did some quick thinking. He went to the tenants and asked them to falsify the books in order to show that their debt to the master was less than it actually was. In that way, the books nearly matched what the manager had been sending the master, and the tenants were certainly happy to have their rents lowered. When the master found out about the manager's scheme, instead of being furious he was impressed with the man's financial ingenuity.
- ❖ By telling this parable, is Jesus commending the manager and his shrewdness? Not at all. Rather He is telling a story about how things are rather than how things ought to be. He uses this parable as an illustration for four truths:

- A. "The people of this world are shrewder in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light" (v. 8). Most Christians would take that as a compliment. We who are honest are also ignorant [ignorant of the financial tricks on how to make a fortune]  
The law of injustice prevails in this world. It is therefore appropriate to use money for our own construction in the other world where there is no 'injustice', so we possess our eternity
- B. Money's only value is as a tool to gain things of real value. Jesus urged His disciples to spend their money on their friends (v. 9). The money would soon be gone anyway ("You can't take it with you!"), so why not use it to "buy" something of eternal value? It is not appropriate for us that we deceive our Lord and offer charity through deception. From another point, this parable was said so we realize that if this manager who acted deceitfully, has been able to achieve praise; so how much more will it be with those that please God in carrying out His commandments in their actions.
- C. A person who cheats with small amounts of money will cheat with large amounts of money. If then you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches?"
- D. People who live for money can't live for anything else. "You cannot serve both God and Money" (v. 13).



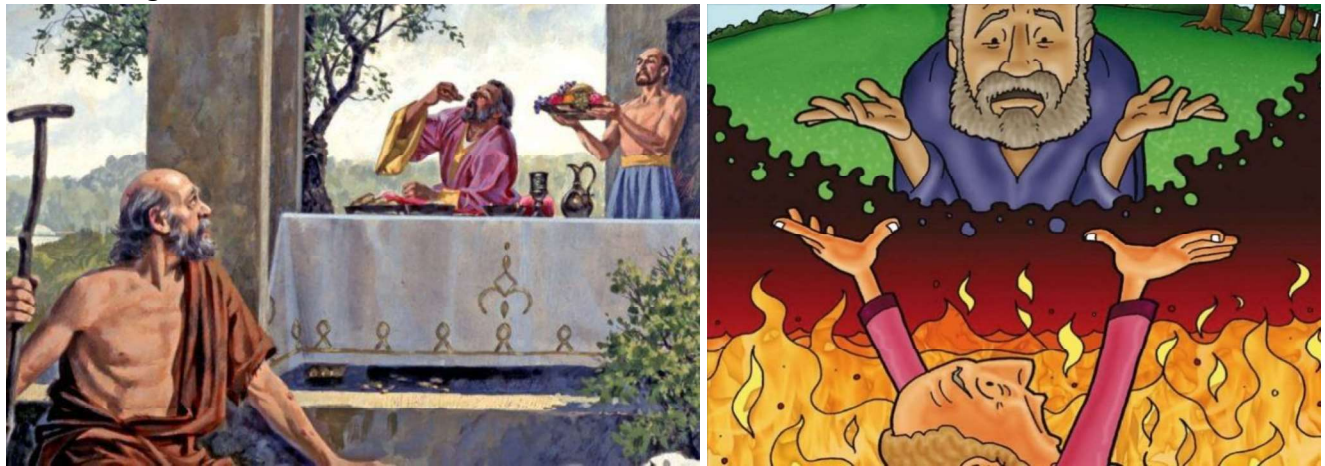
### **The divine fellowship versus the love of money and the difficult commandment chapter 16: 14- 18**

Following this difficult parable and its accompanying teaching, Jesus talks briefly about the relationship between His teaching and the teaching of the Old Testament Law. As we know, Jesus' teaching improves upon the Law at every point and, in actuality, is closer to the spirit and true meaning of the Law than the Pharisees' legalistic adherence to the letter of the Law.

### **The parable of Lazarus and the rich man chapter 16:19-31**

- ❖ This parable is about a rich man and a beggar named Lazarus. The first scene of this parable (vv. 19-21) shows Lazarus begging outside the gate of the rich man's house. The second scene (vv. 22-26) shows Lazarus in heaven and the rich man in hell.
- ❖ In chapter 6, Jesus encouraged the crowds to consider themselves blessed in their poverty, because poverty in this life will give way to great reward in heaven. Then He warned the rich and powerful that the same justice applied to them, only in the reverse. Riches in this life will give way to mourning in the next.
- ❖ Poverty is not a key to heaven in itself, and wealth is not a sin preventing heaven in itself. It is man's life that corrupts this or that. The rich man has no mercy while Lazarus bore his tough life, blessing God.

- ❖ The third scene of the parable (16:27-31) shows the rich man begging Abraham to send Lazarus back to his brothers to warn them of their fate. Abraham refuses, commenting that they have had enough warning.



**Goal we learn: [ It is never too late to return to God and avoid loving money]**

In this lesson, we have chapter 15 showing us God’s kind heart who looks for the lost ones everywhere but yet He does not force anyone to come back to Him. In chapter 16, He explains that after He looks for the lost, He is asking him to be wise and use the earthly matters to gain heavenly rewards and to realize that being rich or poor does not decide his eternity but it is his attitude towards money that matters.

Let us focus on the Prodigal son who realized that money could never fulfill his needs and all what he needed was his father’s loving hug. Let us explore what money means to us as it seems that our way of dealing with money could prevent us from heaven like the rich man or could bring us back to God like the prodigal son.

**Lesson delivery idea**



**If Sheep Could Talk !!**

Did Jesus say anywhere in these parables that the shepherd did not love the 99 sheep or that the woman did not value the nine coins or that the father did not love the older son?

The answer to the first question is obvious. No, Jesus did not anywhere indicate that the shepherd, the woman, or the father did not love and value the 99 sheep, the nine coins, or the older son.

Imagine that the first two parables are cartoons—that way the sheep and the coins can walk and talk! If the 99 sheep had the same concerns as the shepherd, if the nine coins had the same concerns as the woman, and if the older brother had the same concerns as his father, what would they all be doing?



If the sheep and coins could talk and walk like the older brother, they too would be looking for the lost! If the older brother were us, we should be the first to look for our younger brother who is lost and welcome him back.

### Youth and Money

Our youths are the richest youths in history! Unfortunately, as most of their purchases indicate, they have very little wisdom in the way they spend their money. The great majority of their money is spent on themselves: clothes, automobiles, music, and junk food.

For many church youths, the sum total of their financial commitment to Christ is a 10% tithe given out of duty or habit or parental push. We could see from the parables in those chapters that love of money is the basis for separation from God. Let us think what a healthy way of dealing with money should look like.

### Activity time: What Would You Do?

*Choose one option in each pair of options below: [You can pick few only if you have limited lesson time]*

1. Would you rather be:

- a millionaire stuck in an unhappy marriage?
- dirt poor but very happily married?

2. If you received \$100 anonymously in the mail, would you:

- go on a shopping spree at the closest mall?
- send the money to the mission field?

3. Do you think it's better to:

- save your money for a rainy day?
- spend it while you have it?

4. Would you rather spend your summer:

- making \$10.00 an hour loading incredibly heavy bags of cement onto a truck under the hot sun?
- making \$5.00 an hour sitting in an air-conditioned office, watching out the window and counting the bag as they go on the truck?

5. If a salesclerk gave you change for a \$20.00 bill when you only gave her a \$10.00 bill, would you:

- pocket the money
- return the extra \$10.00

6. If you didn't notice the salesclerk's error until you were already home, would you:

- pocket the money
- return to the store and give back the extra \$10.00

7. Would you rather spend \$25.00:

- buying clothes for yourself?

- taking some friends out to dinner?

8. If a friend asked to borrow \$5.00—and you had it—would you:

- tell the friend to get lost
- loan the friend the money

9. If you were on your way to restaurant with money in your pocket and you walked past a homeless person asking for change, would you:

- give the homeless person your money?
- walk on past?

10. If your parents gave you and your younger brother each some money to spend at the store, and your kid brother lost his money on the way there, would you:

- share some of your money with him
- tell him to get lost

After the youths have had time to make their choices, call for a show of hands for each numbered pair. Allow a few moments for discussion with each choice.

### **EXAMINE THE WORD: What Would the Master Say?**

Printed below are five short case studies. Each study concerns a youth and his or her attitude toward money. After each story is read, ask your class this question: "What do you think Jesus would say to this youth?" As your youths discuss these case studies, keep pushing them to reflect what they studied earlier in the lesson. This is not a time to express uninformed personal opinions. It is a time to begin applying scripture to real-life situations. Based on what you have studied today, what do you think Jesus would say to each of these individuals? *[You can pick only one if you have limited lesson time]*

1. Brad is a high school senior. Every day, as soon as school is out, he races to the grocery store, where he works a full eight-hour shift as a checker. On weekends he works in the men's clothing store in the mall, averaging 12-16 hours each weekend. Brad is doing this so that he can save up enough money to buy a really expensive sports car. Since he started working two jobs, his grades have fallen from a B+ average to a D+ average, and he has had to quit attending church. He also has no time for sports or just hanging out with his friends.
2. Kathy works after school at a convenience store. The manager has told her that she is supposed to pay for any food she eats while she is working. But sometimes when she is short on money, she eats a candy bar without paying for it. Kathy thinks, He's not really paying me what I'm worth anyway. This just makes us even.
3. Cal is sitting in the office of his high school counselor, talking about his plans for college. The counselor asks Cal what he plans to do with his life. Cal responds, "Well, I used to want to be a social worker and help people, but I think I'm going to be a corporate lawyer instead because they make tons of money. I want to live in a big house and drive a nice car."

4. Steve's church youth group has taken on the local rescue mission as their project for the year. While the group is planning several projects for the mission, each youth is also supposed to think of ways individually to help the mission and the homeless people who go there. Steve has received money from his grandmother for Christmas. That will buy the new jacket that he has had his eye on in a store. He has had his "old" jacket for only a year, but it was a gift from his parents, and he never really liked it. As he is on his way to the mall to buy the new jacket, he goes past a used clothing store. The thought occurs to him that the money would buy four or five good coats in that store. Those coats could be donated to the mission. "I'll buy that new jacket and donate my old one," Steve decides.

### **EXPERIENCE THE WORD For the Love of Money**

This activity begins with a very important statement: "Nowhere does Jesus say that having money or spending money is sinful. What matters is not how much money we have or really even how we spend it-- but **what place money occupies in our heart.**" Be sure that your youths understand this before moving on.

### **THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO SONS in the 3<sup>rd</sup> parable:**

1. The younger son left home; the older stayed home.
2. The younger son was prodigal (wasteful); the older son was productive (a worker).
3. The younger lost his inheritance; the older did not.
4. The younger did not any longer feel worthy of his father's blessings; the older did.
5. The younger realized his sins; the felt righteous.
6. The younger repented; the older resented.

### **SIMILARITIES IN THE SONS**

1. Both sons wanted a celebration—a banquet.
2. Both sons wanted to celebrate WITHOUT THEIR FATHER.
3. Both sons seemed to feel that joy and celebration were not possible with their father.
4. Neither son seems to have really appreciated or loved their father, even though he loved both of them.
5. Both sons were slaves. The younger son was first of all enslaved by his passions (sins). The older brother was really a slave, too. He told his father that he worked hard for him.
6. Both sons were materialists.
7. Both sons were sinners. The sins of these two sons were very different in their outward manifestations, but inwardly they had the same roots.

Jesus always looked at the heart. We quickly assume that stealing, murder, and violence are wrong. But Jesus goes on to show us in the gospels that prayer, giving, preaching, or showing charity can be sinful, when the motive of the heart is wrong. We would look at the compliant, hard-working older brother and commend him. There is no outward rebellion here. No, there is not, at least not until the celebration. But



the inward motivations of this older brother are just as evil, indeed, they are more evil, for he looked righteous but, in his heart, there was love of money too.



### Take home Prayer

God, now we realize that thinking about money has more into it than we thought. In our everyday life we are put in situations that would show how much we really care about money and how much we care about you. You are always looking for us to repent and abandon our wrong thoughts and you are exceedingly happy with the return of someone who was far from you. You even encouraged us to use earthly matters to gain friends in heaven. Teach me how to put things in their right order and be diligent in my life so that nothing takes me away from you.

**Memory Verse:**

*"No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money" (Luke 16:13).*