

Winter 2021-22

Unit 1 Introduction

The Gospel by Luke

The Gospel of Luke was written especially with Gentile readers in view, a fact that becomes clear from the beginning, as Christ's genealogy is traced all the way back to Adam, rather than Abraham. As a result of this Gentile focus, the book places special emphasis on the teachings of Jesus, as well as His special concern for the underprivileged and outcast. Furthermore, it emphasizes the identity of Jesus as the divine-human Savior who made provision for salvation, available to all of Adam's descendants. And so, while this unit covers only six lessons in the Gospel, encourage students to make a study of the entire Book of Luke, digging deep into the rich and timeless perspectives that it provides.

The first three lessons, which culminate in the Christmas lesson, focus on Christ's entrance into the world in human form. Lesson 1 sets the stage well, reminding us that in John the Baptist we see that Jesus came with a message of repentance, restoration, and the proclamation of the kingdom of God. Through this lesson, find ways to apply these theological truths to the issues and questions students face today.

Lessons 2 and 3 follow suit, reminding us of what it means to know that a Savior has come into the world. We also see, in the various characters of the Incarnation story, the work of divine power, mercy, and grace. Take some time during your teaching to relate the experiences and expressions of these characters to questions or concerns students might have today.

Lesson 4 marks the first of four lessons focused on critical themes addressed in important passages throughout the Book. The first, dealing with love, will challenge students to love in their actions as well as their words, and also prompt them to ask, "Who is my neighbor, and what

does it mean to love that person?” Lesson 5 is key to Luke because it addresses the breadth and reach of the gospel of Jesus Christ. In confronting the conventional mindset of religious leaders, Jesus introduced the reality that God has invited all people—Jew and Gentile—to His “banquet table,” to receive His blessing of salvation.

Lesson 6 surveys the familiar Parable of the Prodigal Son, and in doing so reminds God’s people of both His grace and His desire to welcome all who repent. (And challenges us to welcome them as well.) The unit closes in Lesson 7 with a look at events occurring around the Resurrection story—the pinnacle moment in human history, as salvation is secured for all who believe. This lesson provides opportunity to end the unit on a note of praise and worship to the Lord.