# Mona Vale Anglican Church:

# Studies in Luke, Term 4 2016.

“The way of discipleship”

The word ‘peace’ is a term used in so many different contexts nowadays. I found this description: “Peace is when people are able to resolve their conflicts without violence and can work together to improve the quality of their lives. Peace is when: everyone lives in safety, without fear or threat of violence, and no form of violence is tolerated in law or in practice.”

How pathetic is the world’s view of peace? The Gospel of Luke presents us with the Prince of peace, and challenges us to be agents of that peace, the only true and lasting peace, through being disciples of Jesus the Christ. In Term 4 we are going to explore the gospel of Luke from chapter 4 to chapter 8.

It would be far better to study the book as a whole, or indeed read it with part 2, the book of Acts, for then we get the overall picture. But I recognise that our gatherings would have to be much longer than they are at present.

Luke writes so that we can be absolutely sure about the things that happened in the life and teaching; death and resurrection of Jesus (Luke 1:4). The message is a message about peace, the peace announced by the angels, described by Jesus as the gift of God, the way of life for his followers, and the object of Jesus’ despair as he weeps: “If you, even you (Jerusalem) had only recognised on this day the things that make for peace” (Luke 19:42).

God speaks and exhorts everyone to ‘listen to Jesus’ (Luke 9:35), for it is only by hearing and obeying him that there is salvation – kingdom experience of peace. That is the way of discipleship, and that is what we turn to as we begin this journey with Jesus.

List of Passages, dates and subjects…….

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Study 1 | 16/10/16 | Good News | Luke 4:1-30 |
| Study 2 | 23/10/16 | Proclaiming the good news | Luke 5:1-32 |
| Study 3 | 30/10/16 | Lord of everything | Luke 5:33-6:11 |
| Study 4 | 13/11/16 | True expectations | Luke 6:12-26 |
| Study 5 | 20/11/16 | Love and forgiveness | Luke 6:27-42 |
| Study 6 | 27/11/16 | Heart renewal | Luke 6:43-49 |
| Study 7 | 4/12/16 | Great faith | Luke 7:1-10 |
| Study 8 | 11/12/16 | Fruitfulness | Luke 8:1-15 |

We will preach a sermon on each passage on the date shown above. You may prefer to meet and discuss the study in the week after the sermon. There will be a place to take notes in the weekly newsletter.

As we study this book, there are three themes that Luke draws our attention to:

1. Who Jesus is.
2. What he has come to do.
3. How his contemporaries responded to him.

These themes provide a helpful framework as we seek to live the way of Christ and respond in faith.

# Study 1: Luke 4:1-30 “Good News”

# October 16th 2016

## Starters

1. What is the best news you have ever received? Why is it so good?
2. What makes the gospel ***good*** news?

## Main Course

1. What are the main events in this passage?
2. How does Jesus respond to each of the temptations in verses 1-13? How is this different to the way Adam and Eve responded in Genesis 3:3 and 6?
3. How does Jesus describe what he has come to do in 3:17-22?
4. Read Isaiah 61:1-3 – what is the nature of God’s promise to the exiles – how is this relevant to Jesus’ mission?
5. How does this shape our understanding of everything Jesus does?
6. Why are people so antagonistic to Jesus and his mission (verses 22-30)?

## Dessert

1. What light does Ephesians 6:12 throw on Jesus’ temptation and ours? How can we appropriate the victory of Christ over sin, death and Satan when we are tempted to sin?
2. What does this tell us about the kind of peace Jesus brings? Do you believe that memorising Scripture can help us resist temptation? Are you prepared to do it?
3. What place does the rejection that Jesus experienced play in your own life and witness as a believer?
4. In this passage God, through Christ, issues a summons to conversion. What part are you playing in extending God’s invitation to your neighbours, your family and your friends. Who are you praying for to accept the good news and how can you help them see clearer the identity and mission of Jesus the Christ?

# Study 2: Luke 5:1-32 “Proclaiming the Good News”

# October 23rd 2016

## Starters

1. Who are some authority figures in your life?
2. Why do they have authority? What makes you respect and listen to their authority?

## Main Course

1. What are the main events in this passage? Which miracles are associated with each incident?
2. What is Jesus demonstrating authority over?
3. What do people see when Jesus performs these miracles?
4. Why do we need to recognise that Jesus has great authority?
5. Why has Jesus come (verse 32)? What does this mean?
6. Why does Jesus heal the paralysed man (23-24)? How does Jesus highlight the paralytics’ greatest need?
7. How do all these incidents illustrate Jesus’ mission to restore sinners to a right relationship to God (shalom = God’s peace)?
8. Why is the attitude of the Pharisees so wrong (verses 21,30)?
9. How do you respond to this quote? “If Jesus’ miracles reveal who he is, then equating his miracles with miracles that occur today not only devalues his miracles, but it can also lead to devaluing Jesus himself”.

## Dessert

1. What are the differences between meeting physical, social, emotional needs and meeting spiritual needs?
2. Why is it never enough just to help people with physical, social, emotional needs? How can we take the further step in meeting their spiritual needs, and how is this connected to the peace that God longs for all people? What does this say about who we support financially?
3. How does this passage illustrate the priority of people’s spiritual needs?
4. How will this reshape the way you relate to others? How is the gospel connected to doing good to all people? Why do our ‘good works’ need to be accompanied by words?

# Study 3: Luke 5:33-6:11 “Lord of Everything?”

# October 30th 2016

## Starters

1. I once went to a certain church on Sunday and was greeted at the door by the words, ‘we wear ties at this church’, and I was handed a tie to wear. What are some of the artificial barriers/laws that we put in place?
2. Why do we have them?

## Main Course

1. What are the three incidents in this section? What do they have in common?
2. What does Jesus’ answer in verses 34-35 teach us about his identity?
3. How does his parable in verses 36-38 amplify his answer to their accusation in verse 33? (Hint: Jesus and his ministry is represented by the new garment and the new wine)
4. How does Jesus view the Sabbath? Why does he hold this view?
5. Why are the Pharisees so hostile to Jesus’ behaviour?
6. How does Jesus expect his followers to treat traditional jewish religious activities like fasting and strict Sabbath observance? (A Minister I know fired his assistant minister because he mowed his lawns on a Sunday. How would you justify the minister’s action? What is wrong with what he did??

## Dessert

1. How have we lost the sense of the Sabbath as a gift, as part of the peace God wants us to live in?
2. What are the dangers of cold-hearted legalism?
3. Is it wrong to go shopping on any particular day?
4. Do you have a day off? Why/why not?

# Study 4: Luke 6:12-26 True expectations

# November 13th 2016

## Starters

1. What do you expect from Christian people as far as relationships are concerned? Are we push-overs or are we rigid in our thinking? Or is there another description you would use?
2. What does the phrase, ‘beware of Christians’ evoke in your mind? Is it positive or negative?

## Main Course

1. Looking back through the book of Luke, what Qualifications do the twelve men have/do not have?
2. Why were ***twelve*** selected? How was the number ***twelve*** used in the Old Testament? In the context (verses 1-11) what is Jesus doing by choosing a new group of ***twelve***?
3. Why does Jesus choose ***Judas***? What kind of warning is his selection to us?
4. What will be given to those who are blessed (verses 20-26)?
5. When do they hunger and weep?
6. What does ‘blessed’ mean and where will they be blessed?
7. Why does Jesus pronounce woes on those who are rich, well-fed, laughing and recognised (verses 24-26)?
8. Summarise verses 20-26 in one sentence. How should Jesus’ teaching affect your attitude to life in this world?

## Dessert

1. “Jesus did not really mean that this is how we are to live; it is too radical, too impossible, too foolishly lacking in worldly wisdom”. Why do so many Christians verbally disagree with this statement but lives their lives exactly like this anyway.
2. Select just one aspect of Jesus’ teaching here and share how you will seek the Spirit to bring change to your life?

# Study 5: Luke 6:27-42 “Love and Forgiveness”

# November 20th 2016

## Starters

1. Give an example of someone who has forgiven you for something hurtful you did?
2. Describe love according to what Jesus says about it? Who has shown you this kind of love?

## Main Course

1. According to verses 32-35 how are Jesus’ disciples to behave and why?
2. How can we practically love our enemies?
3. What does it mean to be merciful just as our heavenly father is merciful?
4. Why is it so difficult to forgive those who have wronged us?
5. Verses 41-42. Why is it important to examine ourselves first before we speak to someone else about their wrongdoing?
6. How can we speak the truth in love to those who are in error/hurting others/blatantly sinning?

## Dessert

1. Who do you need to forgive? How will you communicate that to them in a way that honours Christ and promotes peace?
2. Who do you need to speak to about their wrongdoing – on what basis can you proceed?
3. Love is never just sentiment or emotion. How has your understanding of what love is changed as a result of this passage?

# Study 6: Luke 6:43-49 “Heart Renewal”

# November 27th 2016

## Starters

1. What does fruitfulness look like in the Christian life?
2. How well do you know God’s Word?

Very well well fair moderate not at all

(Circle the phrase that describes your acquaintance with the Word of God).

What are some of things you could do to get better Acquainted with God’s Word?

## Main Course

1. In verses 43-45 what do each of the elements in the parable represent? Who is being described?
2. What does a renewed heart look like?
3. How can we know that we have renewed hearts?
4. How do we get renewed hearts? Why do we need one?
5. Describe the wise builder
6. Describe the foolish builder.
7. What is the difference between obedience and legalism?
8. What is the difference between the two types of people? (verses 43-45)
9. How do they differ in verses 46-49?
10. What do these two tests show you about yourself?

## Dessert

1. How would people outside the church describe you?
2. How does a renewed heart enable us to stand when all around us is crumbling?
3. What is the difference between morality and Christianity?

# Study 7: Luke 7:1-10 “Great Faith”

# December 4th 2016

## Starters

1. How would you describe a person who is ‘worthy’?
2. How would you describe a person who is ‘unworthy’?

## Main Course

1. What is your impression of the Centurion from this passage?
2. What do the Jewish elders think of him?
3. What does the Centurion think of himself?
4. What does Jesus think about him?
5. Why is Jesus amazed at him?
6. From this account what is “Great Faith”!

## Dessert

1. How does faith take its power from its object?
2. How does this incident illustrate that truth?
3. What is the connection and difference between faith and work? On what basis do we receive God’s gift of salvation?
4. Do you know that you have eternal life? Why?

# Study 8: Luke 8:1-15 “Fruitfulness”

# December 11th 2016

## Starters

1. Why do some people reject Jesus?
2. Why do some people fall away from following Jesus?

## Main Course

1. What is the ‘seed’ according to Jesus?
2. What does he mean by it being sown?
3. What is the soil according to Jesus?
4. What are the four possible responses described here?
5. Why do some people respond correctly while others do not (11-15)
6. According to verses 15 & 21 what is involved in responding correctly to Jesus? What privileges are given to those who respond correctly?

## Dessert

1. What does fruitfulness in the Christian life look like according to this parable?
2. What warning should we heed from this passage (see also (Acts 3:22-23)
3. “God does not require less under his grace than under the law”. How is it grace that saves us? Why does that still mean we need to listen and obey?
4. Why is the peace that Jesus brings more than a subjective feeling? How would you describe that peace in light of Luke 4-8?