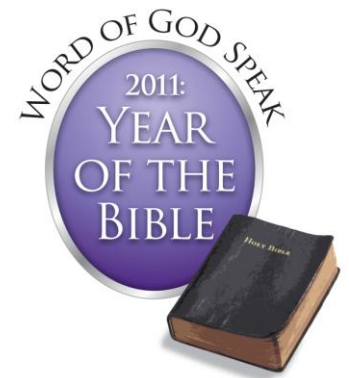


Week 5: Mark 14 – Luke 5

Study Guide for the week of January 31 – February 6, 2011



Personal reflection / journaling exercise

This week reflect on Luke 4:1-13. For something to be an actual temptation, it has to be something one truly wants. Jesus was truly tempted. Carefully consider each of the three temptations that Jesus faced. Why would Jesus have truly wanted each? How does that fact that Jesus was truly tempted affect your understanding of Jesus? We believe that Jesus was without sin, so it would follow that being tempted is not a sin. Giving into a temptation of the devil would be sinful, but being tempted is not sinful. How does that affect your understanding of temptation? What can we learn about facing down temptation from how Jesus faced down each of the temptations? What do we learn about the tenacity of the devil from verse 13? What did Jesus rely on in facing down all three temptations? What are three temptations you are facing now? What is it that you want in each of the temptations? How do you know that giving into each of the temptations would violate God's values for you? How can the temptation of Jesus help you to better face down temptations? Read and carefully reflect on 1 Corinthians 10:13. What are the teachings in this verse about temptation? How does this verse help you in understanding and facing down temptation?

Discussion starters *If you are leading a small group, you may not have time for all of these questions. Pick the ones that will work best for your group.*

1. *Ice Breaker Question:* What do you like best about Christmas?
2. *(This question will be asked each week at the start of the discussion on the Bible readings for the week.)* Was there something that jumped out at you, surprised you, encouraged you, or disturbed you from the readings this last week (or two)? Why?
3. Mark 14 Mark, like Matthew, gives a label to Judas (see v. 44). Many people have mixed feelings about Judas; some hate him, others pity him. What are your thoughts about Judas? What did the other disciples do when Jesus was arrested? Have you ever felt betrayed or abandoned? How have you betrayed or abandoned Jesus? Can you see yourself in Judas or another disciple?
4. Mark 15 What is the aspect of the arrest, trial, suffering, and death of Jesus that jumps out at you or speaks to you?
5. Mark 15: 40-41 The women at the cross couldn't do much: they couldn't testify in court for Jesus, they couldn't come before Pilate, they couldn't control the crowd's thirst for blood, they couldn't order the Roman guards to stop. But they could be present with Jesus as he died. Do you sometimes focus too much on what you can't do? What is a "can't do" that you are struggling with now? Is there a "can do" in this situation that could be helpful if you offered it to God?
6. Luke 1:15 As you begin reading through Luke, take note of how often there is a reference to the work of the Holy Spirit. How have you seen the work of the Holy Spirit in your life?
7. Luke 1:18-20 How do you react to this exchange between Gabriel and Zechariah? Is there something in your life where you are having trouble believing God's word for you?
8. Luke 1:39-45 What do you think of this vignette? Do you think the baby leaping in Elizabeth's womb was simply a coincidence or a sign of confirmation from God to Mary and Elizabeth? Have you had God give you a sign of confirmation? If so, tell us about it. Is there a sign of confirmation that you are looking for now?
9. Luke 4:14-30, 43 In your own words, what is Jesus saying that he came to do? How and why did the crowd's opinion of Jesus change so quickly? Can you recall a time when your view of Jesus changed? What caused that change?
10. Luke 5:1-11 The fact that Jesus asked Simon (Peter) to "*Put out into the deep water,*" can be a metaphor for where Jesus is calling us. Where in your walk with Jesus is He calling you to go deeper? Peter was afraid when he saw the results of going into the deeper water (v.8-9). What fears do you have for going deeper with Christ? Jesus gave Peter a word of assurance (v. 10) after which Peter was willing to leave everything and follow Jesus. What is a word of assurance from Jesus that you need to hear?

Bible verse to memorize: Luke 1:38

Caring Time

It is important to make time in your group to care for each other. Sometimes that happens during the discussion and sometimes it is best to end the time together with a question like this:

- What was the high and low for you from this last week and how can we pray for you?

Also encourage people in the group to get together outside of the group time to foster deeper friendships with each other. Remember that small groups is primarily about sharing life together. It has been said that the most important time in small groups is the time people connect outside of the meeting time.