




Theme: The Art of Salvation – Jesus in the Gospel of Luke ***“Salvation in the Silence”***


Weekly Memory Verse:

³⁵ Then a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son, my Chosen One. Listen to him.” ³⁶ When the voice finished, Jesus was there alone. – Luke 9:34-35a

During Lent, the 40 days and 7 Sundays before Easter, the Meditation Moments will lead us to read the entire gospel of Luke. To reach that goal, some daily readings are longer than usual. Have an extra cup of coffee, or maybe use your lunch break, to make the time to read the whole gospel with us.

Monday, March 21 – Read Luke 7:1-33 (also read 36-50 if you did not get to do that two weeks ago.) Crucifixions were almost routine in Rome’s occupied territories. Because we only hear much about Jesus’ crucifixion today, we might think the Roman soldiers were all personally hostile to Jesus. In fact, like American troops in a foreign nation, they were far from home. They did their work, pleasant or unpleasant. But they were sometimes friendly with the Jewish people, and at times even showed amazing faith in Jesus.

 History says many Romans held Israel’s faith in contempt. Yet here was a Roman soldier who financed a synagogue, cared deeply about his servant’s well-being, and showed faith in Jesus’ healing power. In what ways do you tend to “label” people? How are you growing in your ability to see each human being through God’s eyes of love, rather than letting easy group stereotypes determine how you treat people?

 The centurion sensed, more clearly than many people, that space or time did not limit God’s power the way they limit ours. How did he apply his own experience as a military authority to help him realize ways Jesus’ power might work? Which of your life and work experiences help you better understand and trust God’s power?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, the centurion impressed you, not so much because he’d financed the local synagogue as because he showed such faith in your healing power. Help me to live like that Roman soldier. Amen.

Tuesday, March 22 – Read Luke 8:1-25. Jesus often used stories about common objects or events to teach uncommon truths. A farmer was likely hand-casting seed in plain sight on a

nearby hillside as Jesus told this story. He used words from [Isaiah 6:9-10](#), which identified what *would* happen, in Isaiah's or Jesus' day, not to what God wanted to happen. Hearers with closed minds wouldn't act on God's message no matter how much they listened.

🔥 Jesus described the usual set of outcomes when a farmer sowed his seed by hand across a field. Not all the seed grew, but what took root bore an abundant crop. Jesus used that image to teach about the factors that hinder or nurture spiritual life. What steps are you taking to make your mind and heart “good soil” in which God's word can grow and bear a good crop?

🔥 Jesus ended his parable with a common Hebrew phrase: “Whoever has ears to listen should pay attention!” It went beyond eardrums. In the Bible the ear is synonymous with the heart and mind as an organ that can think, which is also referred to in Proverbs 2:2 and Isaiah 6:9–10. True hearing involves listening and understanding, as we read in Job 34:16. What has helped you tune your inner spiritual “ears” to God's voice, so you don't just give up but persist in seeking to understand God's teachings?

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, you want me to know you. You reveal yourself in many ways, some of them subtle and quiet. Give me ears to listen, a spirit eager to hear to all you wish to teach me. Amen.*

Wednesday, March 23 – Read Luke 8:26-56. The Sea of Galilee sat in a kind of geologic “bowl,” and was always subject to sudden, severe storms. Jesus calmed one of them and amazed his disciples. Yet he showed a different, even greater kind of power as he calmed the inner demons tormenting an unstable man, healed a woman ailing for 12 years and gave life and hope back to a synagogue leader, his wife and their deathly ill child.

🔥 Archaeologists found a boat from Jesus' time in mud at the bottom of the Sea of Galilee (to learn more, visit www.jesusboat.com/boat.php). Such a small boat, with only a sail or oars for power, must have seemed terribly inadequate to deal with a violent storm. Do your human resources seem inadequate to deal with any “storms” you are facing? How can you open yourself to Jesus' power and love, letting him help bring you peace as you face those storms?


🔥 Whether facing a violent, disturbed outcast, a leading yet frantic synagogue ruler, or a milling crowd in which one fearful invalid had touched him with timid faith, Jesus remained calm. How could Jesus resist fear in situations that triggered it in most people? As fear sweeps our world, how can Jesus' peace (see [John 14:27, 16:33](#)) help you avoid panic while taking wise precautions?

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, in this troubled world, storms come in so many different forms and intensities. I thank you that you've promised that I don't ever have to face any of them on my own. Amen.*

Thursday, March 24 – Luke 9:1-36. In answer to Jesus' penetrating question in verse 18, Peter said Jesus was the Christ (Greek for “anointed one,” like the Hebrew Messiah). Jesus did not reject the idea—but did say bluntly that being the Christ meant suffering, not earthly power. And then Moses, Elijah, a flash of light, God's voice—THAT looked like greatness. It left Peter, John, and James speechless. But when they came down from that experience, Jesus again defined greatness as childlike trust in God, healing the sick and broken, serving people's needs, and even suffering at human hands.


🔥 Peter, John, and James probably expected Jesus to descend the mountain, call in the cavalry, and drive out the Roman oppressors! They couldn't yet grasp that greatness in


God's kingdom often looks very different from the world's idea of greatness. Jesus, far from pursuing status or power, served others, trusted God fully and gave himself to save the world. How do you define greatness? In what specific ways do God's ideas of greatness differ from human ideas?

 In what ways have you had to answer Jesus' question in verse 25, "What advantage do people have if they gain the whole world for themselves yet perish or lose their lives?" What choice(s) have you faced, or face now, that promise gain at the cost of your values, self-respect or honor? In what ways can you gain the spiritual strength and self-knowledge to make the right choices?

Prayer: *Humble Jesus, like Peter, I can say you are "the Christ sent from God." But keep me from thinking that following a king like you is always easy and comfortable. Build in me the backbone it takes to serve you faithfully. Amen.*

Friday, March 25 – Luke 9:37-66. From Luke 9:51 on, Jesus was purposefully going to Jerusalem. He arrived in [Luke 19:28-30](#), on what we call Palm Sunday. Luke used this to frame every event after 9:51 as Jesus was going to Jerusalem, where the cross awaited. Yet as he traveled, he said in Luke 10:18 that Satan was falling. This was a march to victory, not defeat. That was true even though part of what it meant for Jesus to "determine to go to Jerusalem" was the growing presence of legal experts and Pharisees testing him with questions that sought to trap him. He answered the question in Luke 10:29, that we'll read tomorrow, with a story showing in vivid human terms how he defined loving your neighbor as yourself.

 Luke 9:57-62, similar to Luke 8:19-21, may feel troubling. Was Jesus against family love and loyalty? No, see [Luke 2:51-52](#), [John 19:26-27](#), for example. But he did say, as scholar N. T. Wright put it in his commentary *Luke for Everyone*, "That's how important the kingdom is: it's even more important than the claims of family, which are themselves the most important normal claims a person can have." Has family, company, school or any other loyalty ever tugged you to let go of your loyalty to God? If that happens, which loyalty will you choose?

 The Good Samaritan in Jesus' story that we'll read about tomorrow, didn't just offer casual help. He put the injured man on "his own donkey," which means he walked, brought the wounded man to an inn, cared for him, paid two days wages, and offered to pay more if needed. How did Jesus' picture of the Samaritan, a man Jewish leaders would automatically despise, reflect God's vast liberality to us? How can God's giving move us to be generous to others in ways we never would achieve out of our own goodness?

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, at every turning point in your life, you went in the direction that God's mission for you pointed. Help me, like the Samaritan in your story, to make your inner compass the one that sets the direction for my life, too. Amen.*

Saturday, March 26 – Read Luke 10:1-42. Jesus' friend Martha was very busy with good, sensible things! She wanted to be a good host, to offer her guest a good meal and restful lodging. We, too, often feel hurried and stressed, because we're trying to do too many good (not bad) things. In Jesus' day, to "sit at someone's feet" meant becoming that person's disciple. The apostle Paul described his student days with the literal Greek phrase "at the feet of Gamaliel" in [Acts 22:3](#). In this story, Martha did what the culture valued in women. She cleaned the house and cooked the food. Mary did what the culture valued in men: became a disciple, which was no doubt striking to those at this meal.

🔥 This story would have shocked many of Luke's readers. To listen at a rabbi's feet was for the rabbi's main followers—an honor their culture kept for men. They truly thought women's place was "in the kitchen." Jesus did not put down Martha's caring. He did say, "Mary has chosen the better part." As you set your priorities, how can you put "listening to Jesus" above even mowing the lawn or increasing your 401K balance?

🔥 Another time, Jesus told a story about seed falling among thorns. We read that whole story on Tuesday. In some lives, he said in Luke 8:14, God's seed is "choked by the concerns, riches, and pleasures of life." In what ways are the current worries about a pandemic or the war in Ukraine affecting your focus on deepening your walk with God? What other distractions at times choke out your desire to connect with God?

Prayer: *God of the universe, it seems amazing that you want me to listen "at your feet." Give me a "Mary" heart, eager to receive all the love and grace you wish to communicate to me. Amen.*