

Deeper Riches: Luke Bible Study

Before You Begin...

Welcome!

Welcome to *Deeper Riches: Luke*, a 17-week inductive Bible study of the life and work of Jesus. I cannot wait for you to experience the incredible riches of this glorious book! Luke is a master storyteller, a trustworthy historian, and a serious theologian. His biography of Jesus is not only a well researched and accurate account of the life of Jesus, it is also a literary masterpiece. As a lover of great movies and books, I was simply floored by his genius when I first read the whole book through in one sitting. It is my hope that this study will help you to experience a little bit of this awe and wonder for yourself. Sometimes the Bible can feel tame, the narratives so far removed from our lives today. It is my fervent prayer that this little Bible study will help bring this ancient story to life for you, and that in some way it will be a tribute to the literary genius of its author. More than enjoying a good story, I hope you will grow in your knowledge and love for the great Messiah King whom this story is all about. He is only One truly worthy of all our adoration and attention. I invite you to embark on this journey with me, a journey to discover the treasures of wisdom and knowledge that lead to deeper worship of our King.

~ *Michelle* at DeeperRiches.com

Introduction:

As you get ready to dive into *Deeper Riches: Luke*, here are a few things you should know:

1. This is an Inductive Bible Study. It requires attention to detail and a willingness to apply your mind, as well as your heart, to your study of God's Word. We will familiarize ourselves with the story by reading and rereading, and marking things that stand out in the text. We will then interpret the scriptures by asking good questions, looking for connections between the stories, summarizing what is happening, and thinking about what Luke may have wanted his readers to understand. Lastly, we will apply what we have learned to our daily lives and lock it with prayer. **This process of study is called "Observe-Interpret-Apply."**

2. Each lesson is available in both printable PDF or mobile formats, and there are many different ways you can engage in the study process depending on your time, experience and interest. We hope you will access our resource library with helpful links and study tools, including Observations Guides to help you learn to study a narrative book like Luke, and Weekly Discussion Guides to help small group leaders make the most of their group time.

Deeper Riches: Luke

3. This study is designed to fit YOU. The first step of inductive Bible study is to read the passage and make **Observations**. This step is where you can really customize this study to make it your own. *Observations* are just things you notice about what you read. For a narrative book like Luke, the process is very simple: Luke is a story, so you'll begin by asking yourself Who? What? When? Where? (and sometimes How? and Why?). You'll be prompted to do these *Observations* in Question #1 of every lesson. This step can be as long or short as you like depending on things like your time, your interest, and your confidence in studying the Bible. Here are some ideas of how to make this work for you:

- ❖ **If you are just getting started studying the Bible or don't have a ton of time**, all you need is a copy of Luke you can write on, and a way to print the homework every week. When you get to the Observation question of the homework (always Question #1), just make a few notes directly on the homework page or in your copy of Luke. Then go on to answer the other homework questions. It's that simple. **You can expect to spend about 30 minutes a day over 5 days to complete the homework this way.**
- ❖ **If you prefer to take some extra time to dig deeper into the text on your own** before answering any homework questions, we have what you need. As you begin to study each passage, grab your notebook, and/or one of our *Observation Guides* and take as long as you like to search for treasures in the Scripture. Enjoy the journey, but be sure to pace yourself. Maybe alternate each day between Observations and answering the homework questions. **This deeper dive option would take about 20-30 minutes a day over 9-10 days, or one hour a day for 5 days.**
- ❖ **If you are in a busy phase of life and don't have time to complete 5 days of homework**, read the chapter a few days in a row before meeting with your small group. Maybe listen to an audio Bible. Talk to God about what you read or heard. Instead of beginning at the Day 1 homework, **go straight to Day 5**, where we wrap up the entire chapter with some big idea questions. In a busy season of life, it is enough to come to small group familiar with the passage that will be discussed. You will still get a great deal out of the discussion. Give yourself grace!

4. This study was written to bless you. No matter where you are in your own journey of learning to study the Scriptures, or how much time you have to devote to studying Luke, it is my desire that this Deeper Riches study will bless you. Studying the Bible is a skill that can be learned over time, and the best way to learn is to just begin with what you have. The goal is not to have all the answers, but to know our great God more and more! I promise that every minute you spend in the Word of God will bear fruit in your life both now and into eternity. This is the stuff of heaven on earth! Deeper Riches await you in this incredible Gospel of Luke. Let's dive in!

Gather Your Supplies:

Here's what you need to get started:

1. **A double-spaced copy of Luke you can write on.** You can print a double-spaced copy of Luke in its entirety (or chapter by chapter) at DeeperRiches.com. (Another option is to purchase the ESV Scripture Journal: Luke.)
2. **Print the Week 1 Activity** (for Luke 1:1-4) **and the Week 2 Homework** (for Luke 1:5-80). Mobile versions are also available for each lesson.
3. **A notebook or journal** for writing your Observations, Notes, and Prayer Requests from your small group time.
4. **Optional: Colored pencils, pens, or highlighters.** (My favorite are Crayola Twistable Crayons.)

Helpful Tips:

1. **Set aside a regular time and place to work on Bible Study.** How much time you will need depends on how deeply you want to dig into the Scriptures. As a general starting place, we recommend 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week.
2. **Don't be intimidated.** There is treasure here for everyone. Remember the Gospel of Luke is primarily a STORY. It is well-written and easy to understand at face value. If you can enjoy a good story, you will get a lot out of this study. There may be some challenging questions here and there, or things in the text that are puzzling. That's ok! Make your best guess and move on. Even Bible experts still have things they argue or wonder about. The goal is to know God more and love God more, not to become an expert. Read it like a story and you will be fine.
3. **What if I don't know the "right" answer?** Most of the homework questions in Deeper Riches: Luke are written to allow for a variety of answers, so there is not just one "right answer." The homework questions are meant to help you think about the passage, or see something you wouldn't have noticed on your own. When you come across a question that you don't know the

Deeper Riches: Luke

answer to, look back at the Scripture and read it again. You may still be puzzled. Just write down your best guess and move on. You may find yourself thinking about that question as you go about your day and a better answer may come to your mind. This is called **meditation** and it is a very good, very Christian thing. The questions that leave you thinking will bless you if you give yourself permission to ponder them over time. They also make for great small group discussion! Let your small group leader know if there is a question that you really want to discuss. If you still want to know what the experts think about these things (I often do!), then look in your Study Bible or some on-line commentaries AFTER you have come up with your own best guess.

4. **Remember you are not alone.** Bible study is not a solitary intellectual exercise, but a conversation with the God of the Universe. Whenever you open the Word, God is right there speaking to you if you will give Him your attention. He has given you His Holy Spirit to help you understand what you read and to show you how to apply it to your life.

5. **Begin and end every study session with prayer.** Acknowledge that the Living God is there with you. Turn your eyes to Him and invite Him to speak to you. When He speaks, stop right there and respond back to Him in prayer. Every lesson ends with a prayer prompt. Don't skip these. Prayer is the way we really lock in what God is showing us so that the Word transforms us inside and out.

6. **Pace yourself.** If you are one of those people who like to go line by line and dig deep for all the hidden treasures in the Scripture, you need to keep the big picture in view. Luke is a very long book with so much wealth that you could spend a month digging into each and every story. Instead, we are covering the entire book in one school year, so you will need to keep your eyes on the prize and look for the forest, not just the trees. The lessons are written to help you do just that. You may need to discipline yourself to look for how the stories connect to one another, rather than drilling down to such detail that you don't make it through the entire week's reading.

7. **Repeated reading and prayer is enough.** If you are in a busy phase of life and don't have time to do deep study, read the chapter a few days in a row before meeting with your small group. Maybe listen to an audio Bible. Then talk to God about what you read or heard. In a busy season of life, it is enough to come to small group having read the text a few times so you at least are familiar with the stories. You will still get a great deal out of the discussion. Give yourself grace.

It takes years of practice to get really comfortable with studying the Bible. Wherever you are on that journey, it is our prayer that studying the Gospel of Luke will help you grow in your love for the Word of God and for God, Himself.

For Small Group Leaders...

Welcome! If you are leading a small group using Deeper Riches: Luke, or even studying the Gospel of Luke without the Deeper Riches homework, we have some resources that we hope will help you get the most out of your personal study and group discussion.

Discussion Guides

One of the most challenging things about leading a small group discussion of Luke is that there is a large chunk of Scripture to cover each week in a limited amount of time. In order to assist you in facilitating a discussion that covers the entire lesson, we have put together a Discussion Guide for each week. The questions are selected from the homework and are chosen because they either pull together the entire week's readings, focus on the common threads that run through the whole book of Luke, or allow for personal application. The Discussion Guide appears as the final page of every homework lesson. The guides are also available as individual PDFs.

Printing the Homework

The weekly homework lessons are available in both printable or mobile formats. Some of your group members may benefit from having the next homework handed to them at the end of every small group meeting, especially if they don't have access to a printer at home. It may be worth discussing the first week.

Customizing the Observation Step

The first question of each lesson asks you to make Observations about the text. This is the most important step in the Observe-Interpret-Apply process. The time you invest in this step will make Interpreting and Applying the text that much easier. Your group members will probably have differing levels of experience and comfort with doing Observations. Please be sure to review the different Observation options in the Introduction, so you can encourage them to find what works for them. Familiarize yourself with our Observation Guides as well. Some leaders like to give their group members a laminated copy of the Pocket Guide to keep with their study materials.

Study Luke 1:1-4 at the First Meeting

Make sure to dive right into the first four verses of Luke the first time your group gathers. The Week 1 Lesson covers only Luke 1:1-4, and is meant to be completed together during your first small group time. As the leader you will want to come prepared to share some things you have learned about Luke and his Gospel book. The homework for the remaining weeks is to be completed **prior** to the discussion of that week's text. For example:

Week 1: Meet to discuss Luke 1:1-4, as well as get to know one another and set expectations. Come prepared to lead your group through the Week 1 Introductory Lesson. Discuss how to do

Deeper Riches: Luke

Observations and the options outlined in the Introduction. Hand out the homework for Week 2, to be completed before meeting again.

Week 2: Discuss Luke 1:5-80 (covered in the Week 2 homework) using the Discussion Guide at the end of the lesson. Hand out homework for Week 3, or make sure everyone has a way to access it easily online.

On the use of Commentaries

As the small group leader, you may find Bible commentaries to be a helpful tool in preparing to lead the discussion, but it is easy to get lost in the incredible amount of commentary that is available for every chapter of Luke. In order to get the most out of your personal study time, I recommend that you reserve your use of commentaries for one or two questions that are burning in your own mind, rather than reading extensively. As a general rule, I do not seek commentary until I have thought hard enough about the question to form an opinion of my own first. Two exceptions to this rule: A good introduction to Luke, which includes an outline and the major themes, can really help you on the front end to unlock your understanding of the entire book. Second, to make sense of things that are specific to the first century, a little expert help can go a long way. A Study Bible or Bible Dictionary can help with that, or just a quick glance through the free online commentaries for a specific verse at biblehub.com. It is also perfectly ok to come to small group without having consulted any Bible commentary.

How to contact us with questions about the homework

If you come across a question in the homework that is unclear or particularly puzzling, please feel free to contact me to ask for clarification. It may be that I had something particular in mind when I wrote the question, and I'd be happy to share that insight. It is also possible that the question was not well worded and a little explanation could go a long way. In that case I would love your feedback in order to make the question better for future users. I would also love to hear from you if a particular question was really used by God to touch the hearts of your group members. Then I can be sure to include it when the study goes to print. You can send questions and feedback to michelle@deeperriches.com.

Small Group Leader Training

It is outside the scope of deeperriches.com to provide personal Small Group Leader training. Please make sure to take advantage of whatever your local church has to offer to learn how to shepherd your group well.

May God bless your personal journey with Jesus in your study of Luke this year, and may the overflow of your time in His presence bless the members of your group abundantly.