

LOVE WALKED AMONG US

PT. 2

A SERIES IN LUKE'S GOSPEL



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LOVE WALKED AMONG US PT. 2

This time last year, we walked through the opening nine chapters of Luke's Gospel. We saw Jesus' birth, his baptism, we heard the sermon on the plain, we saw him begin to gather his disciples, and begin teaching in parables of the kingdom. Then at chapter 9, verse 51, we hear that: "When the days were coming to a close for him to be taken up, he determined to journey to Jerusalem."

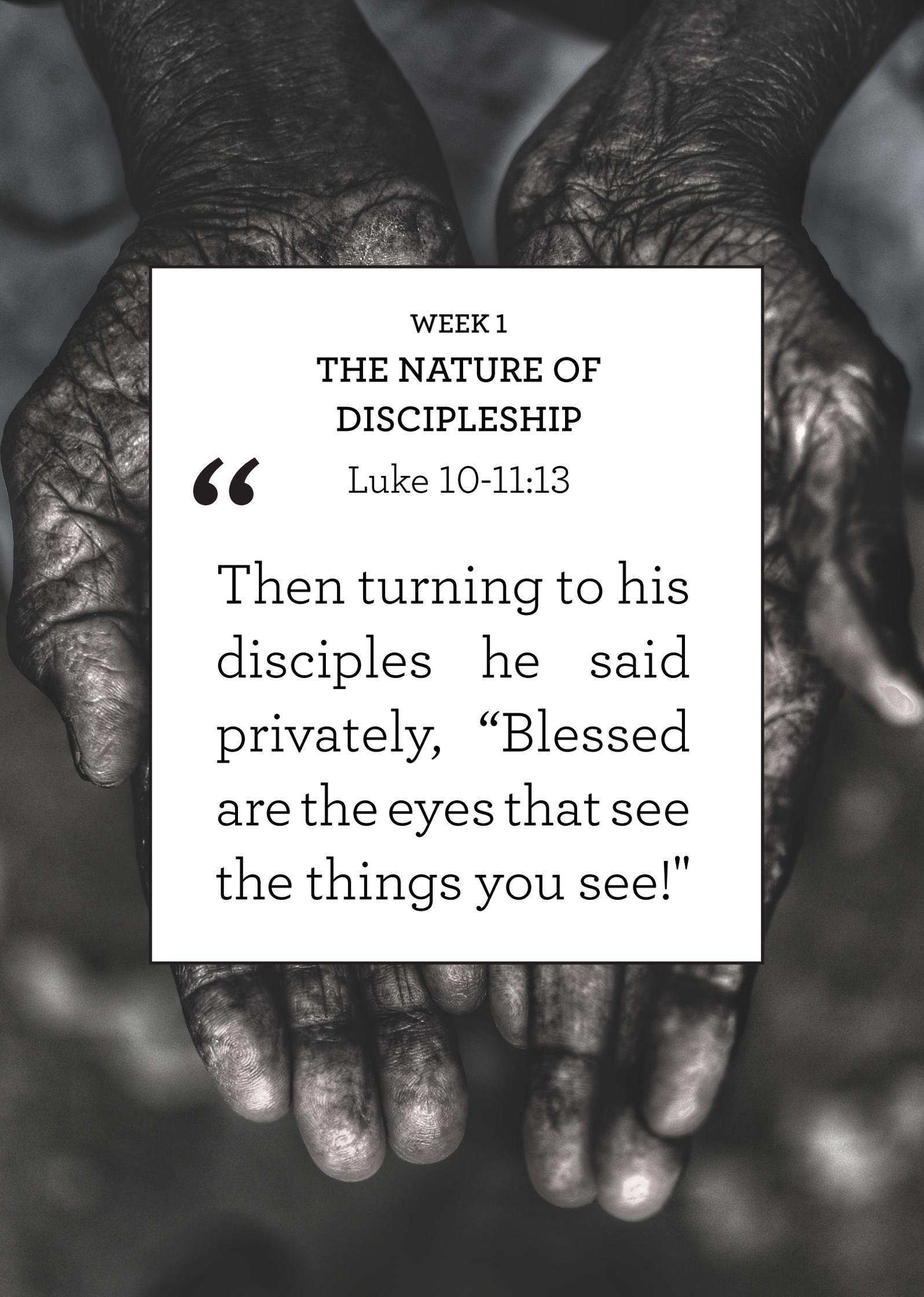
Barely a third of the way through Luke's Gospel, this verse is already framing the rest of what we will see and hear, in view of the end of the story. That is, from this point on, everything is leading us to Jerusalem and therefore to Jesus' cross. We are reminded of this five times in the coming chapters. Luke wants us to make sure that we know that Jesus has set himself toward Jerusalem, toward his cross. In other words we could say that everything that happens from here on out happens in the shadow of the cross.

The Gospel of Luke is intent on showing us how the cross turns everyone's world upside-down. Luke wants us to see how Jesus' mission is to outsiders: to the poor, and marginalized. He wants us to meet the shocking, surprising people Jesus hung out with; those he was constantly including. In the words of Mary's song in the opening of Luke's Gospel: "He has toppled the mighty from their thrones, and exalted the lowly."

**“ everything
that happens
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of the cross.**

Luke forces us to wrestle with the social implications of these kingdom communities that Jesus was forming. Love walked among us, and that should change the way that we see everything.

In this series, we are hoping that you will meet Jesus in all his confrontational, merciful, brilliant, surprising, world-overturning glory. This same Jesus who walked among us still lives among us today, and that should give us all the hope in the world, and turn all of our worlds on their heads.



WEEK 1
THE NATURE OF
DISCIPLESHIP

“ Luke 10-11:13

Then turning to his disciples he said privately, “Blessed are the eyes that see the things you see!”

STUDY QUESTIONS

Read Luke 10:25–37.



DISCOVER

What's interesting here? What do you learn? What don't you understand? What do you discover about God?

We went through Luke 1–9 this time last year. What do you remember (if anything), from those opening chapters?

How would you answer the question of verse 25?

What does Jesus' response show about his understanding of how the law works?

Read verse 29 again. What do we find out about the expert in the law's intentions in this verse?

Salvation comes from an unexpected, despised source. How might this be a parable about Jesus' ministry?



NURTURE

What do you love in this passage? How does it speak to your heart? How does it make you feel?

Rewrite this story as a modern Australian story. Does it change the effect of the story for you?

Who do you identify with in the story?

In verse 29 it says that the expert in the law was trying to "justify himself." Do you ever find yourself trying to justify how good you are, to try and improve Jesus' opinion of you?

We can sometimes avoid certain people because we're trying to protect the honour of the Christian faith. But based on this parable that Jesus told, how does he feel about that?



ACT

How should we live differently because of these words? What is one thing in this passage that really stirs you to act?

As they usually are, Jesus is using this parable not as a moral lesson, but as a story to walk into the backdoor of people's hearts with the gospel. How can we be using stories to share the gospel in a similar way with those around us?

None of us can live up to a perfect standard of loving God and neighbour. But in Christ, we can start to take steps to show mercy to those around us. How can your group be caring for the needy this week?

WEEK 2
WARNINGS AND WOES

Luke 11:14-54

“

No one lights a lamp and puts it in the cellar or under a basket, but on a lampstand, so that those who come in may see its light.



STUDY QUESTIONS

Read Luke 11:33–54.



DISCOVER

What's interesting here? What do you learn? What don't you understand? What do you discover about God?

How is this image of light used in verses 33-36?

What does it mean to let your "light shine"?

What are some of the things that Jesus condemns in the Pharisees in verses 42-54?

What do you think the "key to knowledge" is" (verse 52)?



NURTURE

What do you love in this passage? How does it speak to your heart? How does it make you feel?

Do any of these things that Jesus condemns speak to our world today?

In Luke 16:15, Jesus says to the Pharisees: "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts." Are there any ways that you can see this same tendency in your own heart? Are you ever tempted to do something wrong because you know that people will approve of you more?

Jesus saw clearly that there were many leaders in the first-century world who were using their education for political power and social gain. In what ways can we see the same heart today?



ACT

How should we live differently because of these words? What is one thing in this passage that really stirs you to act?

What kind of a life is Jesus showing us in verses 33-36?

Think of one thing you've spoken about that you'd like to change. How can you be making steps toward changing that this week?

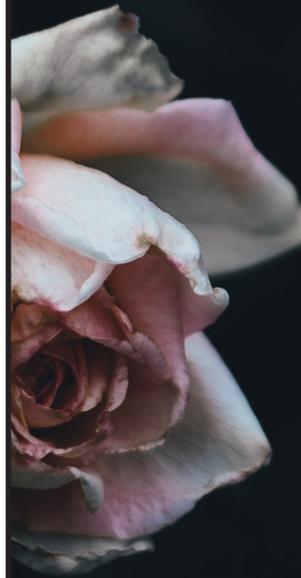
Spend some time praying for one another, and some of the things you've spoken about, trusting that God will be working to change you by his Spirit.

WEEK 3
THE COMING CRISIS

Luke 12:1-13:9

“

Consider how the wildflowers grow: They don't labor or spin thread. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was adorned like one of these.



STUDY QUESTIONS

Read Luke 12:1–12.



DISCOVER

What's interesting here? What do you learn? What don't you understand? What do you discover about God?

Who are all the people mentioned in verses 1-12?

Do these verses tell us that we should fear God or not?

What does it mean to "blaspheme against the Holy Spirit" (verse 10)?

Read Luke 12:13–34.

What does Jesus teach about greed and wealth in these verses?

What does Jesus mean by calling people to be "rich towards God" in verse 21?



NURTURE

What do you love in this passage? How does it speak to your heart? How does it make you feel?

Have you ever feared that you may have blasphemed the Holy Spirit?

Are there any similarities between the greed shown in Jesus' day (verses 13-34) and the greed and anxiety around us today?

Are there any similarities between the greed Jesus is talking about, and the greed in your own heart?



ACT

How should we live differently because of these words? What is one thing in this passage that really stirs you to act?

How does Jesus challenge your thinking about possessions, security, and God's rule over your life?

What's one way that you can be intentionally being generous with your treasure on earth this week?

What's one way that you can be intentionally "storing up your treasure in heaven" this week?



WEEK 4

KINGDOM REVERSALS

Luke 13:10-14:35

“

Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”

STUDY QUESTIONS

Read Luke 14:1–24.



DISCOVER

What's interesting here? What do you learn? What don't you understand? What do you discover about God?

What was the last party that you attended or hosted? Who was invited?

How enjoyable was it for you?

What tone is set for the dinner party by what we've learned in verse 1, and by the summary of verse 6?

How does Jesus' parable in verses 7-14 show us the reversals of the Kingdom of God?

Retell the parable of verses 15-24 in your own words.

How was this parable meant to effect the listeners?



NURTURE

What do you love in this passage? How does it speak to your heart? How does it make you feel?

How might people in the church today compete for status?

Read James 2:1-9. How does this give us a different picture for what the church should look like?

Do any of the excuses that people give for not attending the banquet resonate with you?



ACT

How should we live differently because of these words? What is one thing in this passage that really stirs you to act?

What does it mean for the church today to go out to the "highways and hedges" to bring people into God's house?

Make a list of some people you can invite over for a meal, who may have never tasted the hospitality of God.

Spend some time praying for all the things keeping you from attending the banquet, or for those you can invite to the banquet.

WEEK 5
LOVE FOR THE LOST

Luke 15

“

Let's celebrate with a feast, because this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’



STUDY QUESTIONS

Read Luke 15:1-2, 11-32.

D ISCOVER
What's interesting here? What do you learn? What don't you understand? What do you discover about God?

Have you ever been forgiven for something that you have done? If so, what was it like to be welcomed back into that relationship?

What do verses 1–2 show us about the reason for the following parables?

When the younger son comes to his senses, what does he expect to receive from his father? What does he receive?

As a group, list all the qualities of God that are shown through the Father.

Do you find any of them surprising?

What does the older son ultimately want from his father? Where is he at the end of the story?

N URTURE
What do you love in this passage? How does it speak to your heart? How does it make you feel?

Which of the two sons do you more identify with?

How is our identity restored through the grace of the Father?

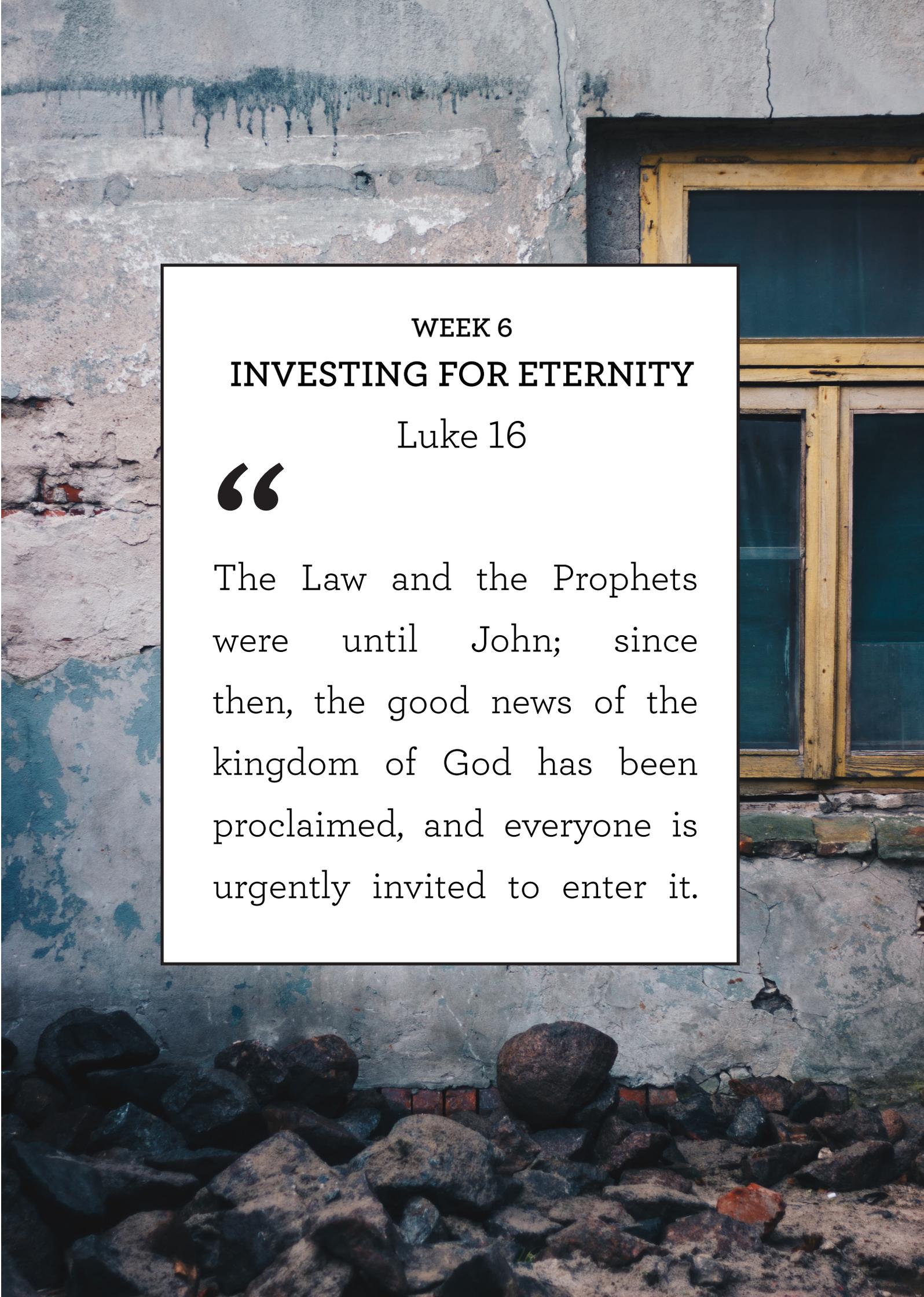
Do you celebrate the same things that God celebrates in this story?

Have you ever been cynical and mocked someone who's returned to Jesus? Do you wish you could change anything about that experience?

A CT
How should we live differently because of these words? What is one thing in this passage that really stirs you to act?

How can you be helping one another not to be like the rebellious younger brother nor the proud, religious older brother?

The parable ends on a cliffhanger; Jesus doesn't give us the ending. How can we as a church be pursuing the ending that the parable is leading us towards?



WEEK 6
INVESTING FOR ETERNITY

Luke 16

“

The Law and the Prophets
were until John; since
then, the good news of the
kingdom of God has been
proclaimed, and everyone is
urgently invited to enter it.

STUDY QUESTIONS

Read Luke 16:14–31.



DISCOVER

What's interesting here? What do you learn? What don't you understand? What do you discover about God?

What do you think is the key verse in this section?

Do you think there's any significance to Lazarus being named, but "the rich man" not being given a name?

Who reacts most strongly to this parable?

How does the parable from verse 19 expand on the teaching that "you cannot serve both God and money"?

What do verses 30–31 tell us about faith?



NURTURE

What do you love in this passage? How does it speak to your heart? How does it make you feel?

What do you think was the greatest sin of "the rich man"?

"The reason people don't believe is not because of too little evidence; it's because of too much sin. Too much wanting to be at the centre of the universe. Too unwilling to listen to the truth of Scripture." Don Carson.

Do you agree with this quote?

What is your greatest struggle in regards to money?

Who's someone you know who is incredibly generous?



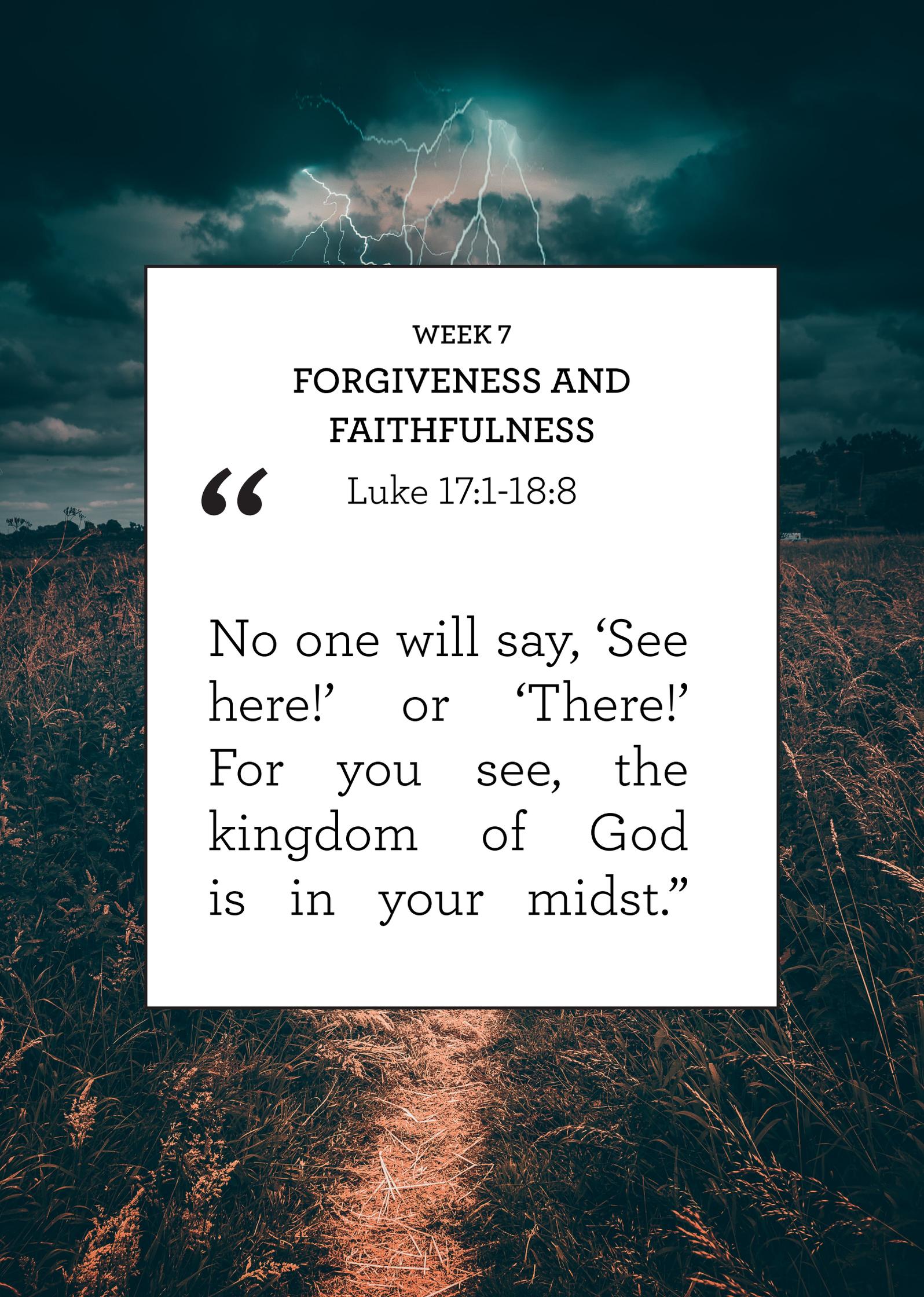
ACT

How should we live differently because of these words? What is one thing in this passage that really stirs you to act?

What would it look like practically in your life if you treated money and material goods as something God has trusted you with?

What would it look like for you to be listening to the witness of Moses and the Prophets in your life?

How can your group be using your money to love those who need it this week?



WEEK 7
FORGIVENESS AND
FAITHFULNESS

“ Luke 17:1-18:8

No one will say, ‘See here!’ or ‘There!’
For you see, the kingdom of God
is in your midst.”

STUDY QUESTIONS

Read Luke 17:20–18:8.



DISCOVER

What's interesting here? What do you learn? What don't you understand? What do you discover about God?

What does Jesus mean by "the kingdom of God is in your midst"? (verse 21)

What warnings does Jesus give for the days when God's judgement falls? (verses 30–31)

Read **Matthew 24:29–31** and **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**. How do all these verses paint a picture of the day of the Lord for us?

How does the parable of 18:1-8 help us to understand what God is like?



NURTURE

What do you love in this passage? How does it speak to your heart? How does it make you feel?

If the kingdom of God is in our midst, in our grasp, then what implications does that have for us now?

How do the warnings of verses 26–30 make you feel?

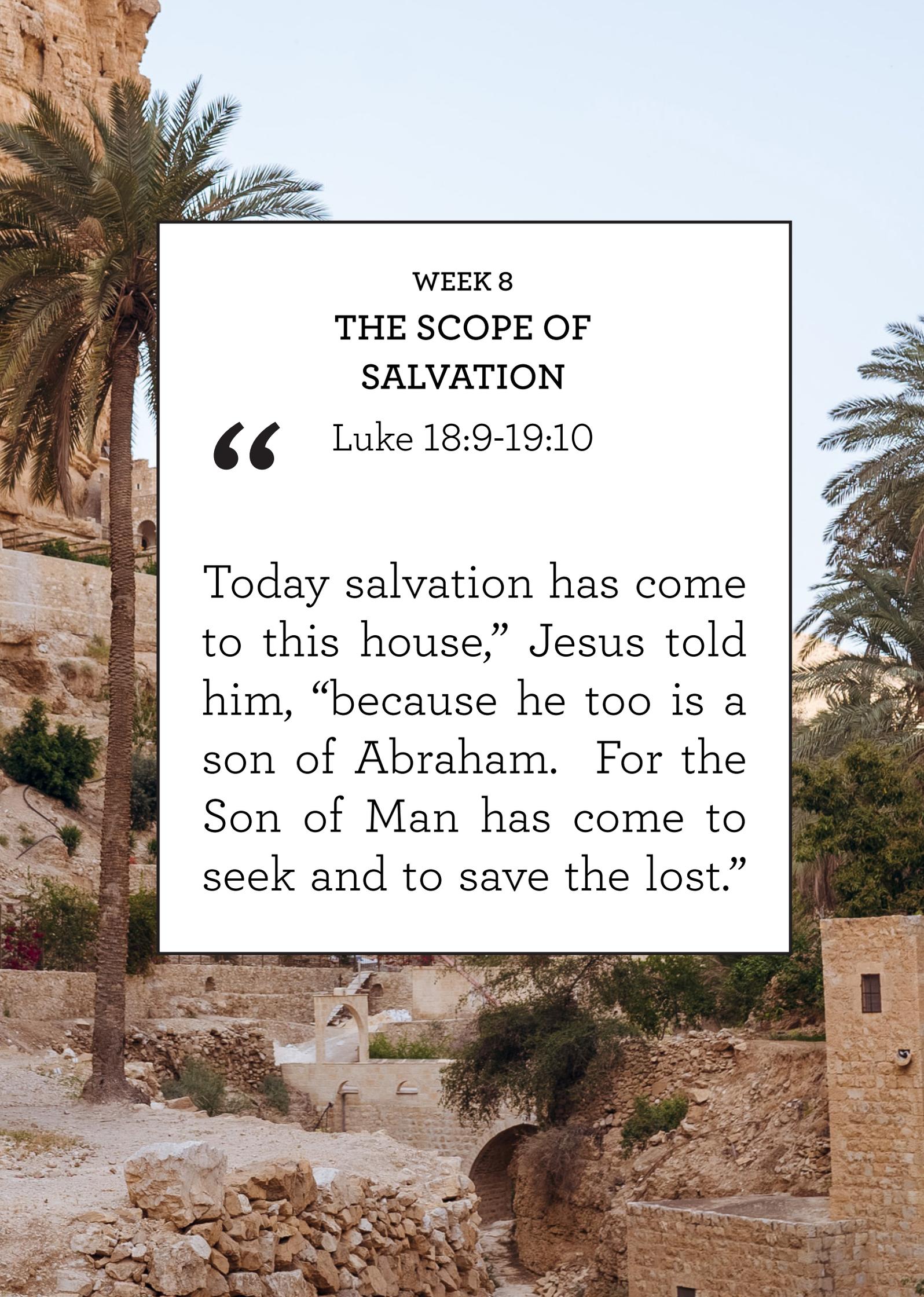


ACT

How should we live differently because of these words? What is one thing in this passage that really stirs you to act?

Two commands that we've read: "Always pray and do not lose heart" (18:1) and "Encourage one another with these words" (1 Thessalonians 4:18). How can you be praying whole-heartedly for the kingdom now?

How can you be encouraging your brothers and sisters with the hope of the kingdom this week?

The background of the image shows a desert landscape with a tall palm tree on the left, stone ruins, and a clear sky. The text is overlaid on a white rectangular box.

WEEK 8
THE SCOPE OF
SALVATION

“ Luke 18:9-19:10

Today salvation has come to this house,” Jesus told him, “because he too is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save the lost.”

STUDY QUESTIONS

Read Luke 19:1–10.

As Jesus approaches Jerusalem, he's met by a string of interesting people. All of them illustrate either right ways or wrong ways to approach the Kingdom and the King. From what you've seen and heard of Jesus already in these studies, what do you think he's looking for in these people? Have you ever been singled out and called from a crowd unexpectedly by someone who was in the spotlight? What was that experience like?

D ISCOVER What's interesting here? What do you learn? What don't you understand? What do you discover about God?

When you think of the word "salvation," what images come to mind?

Why would everyone in Jericho have disliked Zacchaeus?

What was so surprising about Jesus pursuing a man like Zacchaeus?

Through Jesus staying at Zacchaeus' house, "salvation came to that house."

What does this say to us about salvation?

N URTURE What do you love in this passage? How does it speak to your heart? How does it make you feel?

What kinds of people are you sometimes tempted to think should be off-limits to Jesus' friendship?

Zacchaeus didn't know a lot about Jesus, but he knew that what Jesus offered was better than money. What are some of the things that people can cling to instead of opening their hands before Jesus?

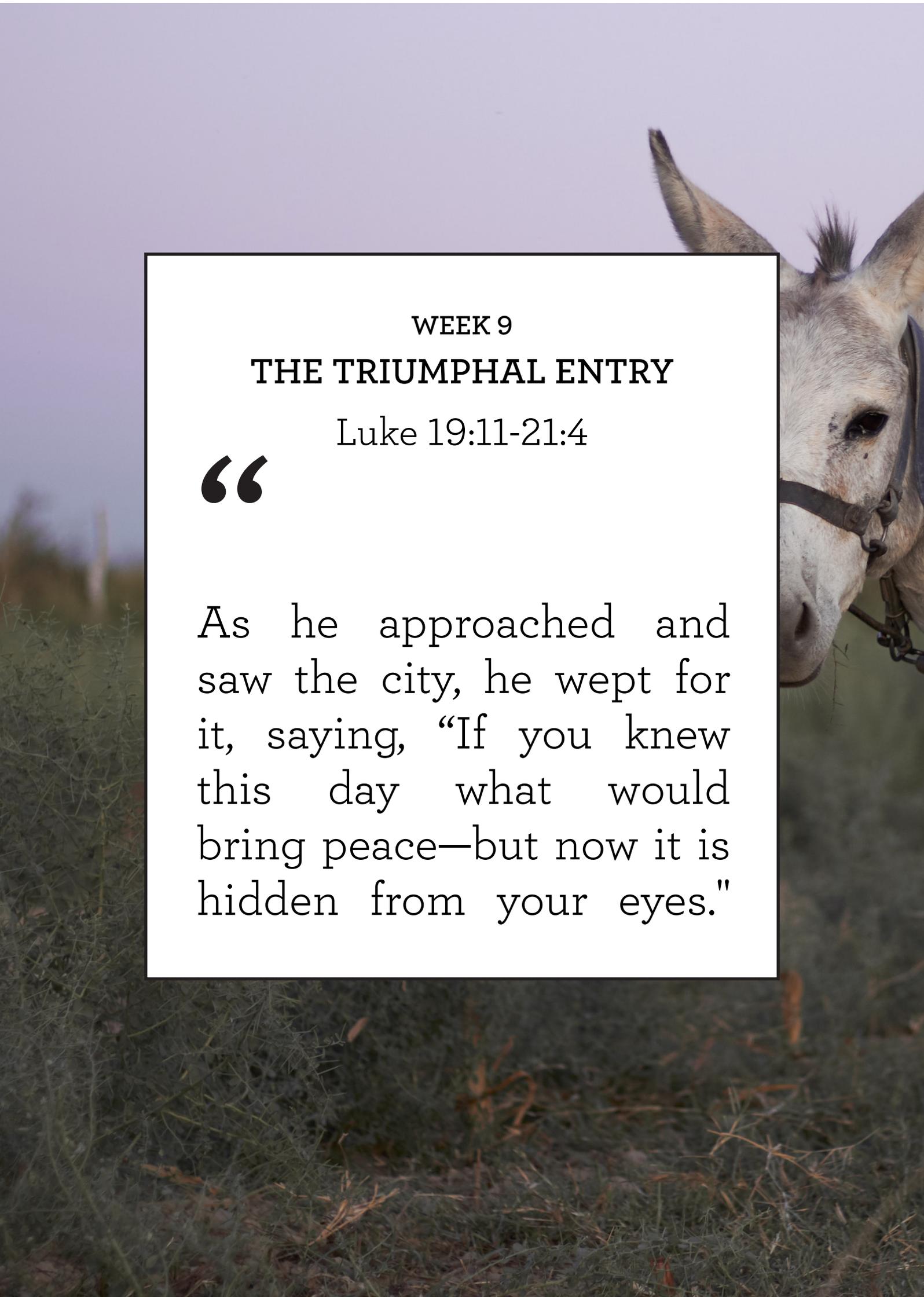
What is (or was) your "thing"?

What might it look like to trust Christ's treasure over those things?

A CT How should we live differently because of these words? What is one thing in this passage that really stirs you to act?

Who do you know who is consistently friendly with outsiders?

What's one place where you can be stepping out to welcome those who need it this week?



WEEK 9
THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

Luke 19:11-21:4

“

As he approached and saw the city, he wept for it, saying, “If you knew this day what would bring peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes.”

STUDY QUESTIONS

Read **Luke 19:28–48**.



DISCOVER

What's interesting here? What do you learn? What don't you understand? What do you discover about God?

What's a time in your life where Jesus asked you to follow him into a difficult place, to do something scary or to face difficulty?

Read **Zechariah 8:3** and **9:9**. What is Jesus claiming in his selection of transport for the journey up the hill to Jerusalem?

Jesus comes as a fulfilment of all the hopes and longings for a king who would bring peace from heaven itself. But why are the Pharisees still anxious in this scene?

The long journey to Jerusalem is drawing to a close. What brings Jesus to tears as he looks to Jerusalem? (verses 41-44)



NURTURE

What do you love in this passage? How does it speak to your heart? How does it make you feel?

The crowds cheer for Jesus and sing his praises, but if they'd known that he was going to the cross, they would've been confused and distressed.

Are we only willing to follow Jesus when he does what we want, or are we willing to follow him into trouble, controversy, trial and death?

What do Jesus' tears show us about what our attitude should be toward cultures that don't embrace God's salvation?



ACT

How should we live differently because of these words? What is one thing in this passage that really stirs you to act?

What does it mean for us today to follow Jesus in times of such difficulty?

Spend some time praying for those who don't embrace God's salvation.

PRAYER POINTS

PRAYER POINTS



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