



Stewardship in the Second Testament

Lesson 3: Luke and Acts

Overview

This session explores Luke and Acts' vision of a community where no one is in need and all share in God's abundance. Participants will reflect on how generosity, shared resources, and Spirit-led community life shape faithful stewardship today.

Preparation for the Teacher

- Read the texts (found below) ahead of time.
- Watch the video (link below)—it may stimulate additional questions appropriate for your context. Make certain you have tested the equipment necessary for showing the video—it helps to keep the technical gremlins away!
- Do a little homework about your church and community. What ministries for the poor are available in your community? Food banks, homeless shelters, community action organizations, rent assistance programs, soup or community kitchens, utility assistance funds, clothing ministries, and in some states community trustees (often an elected office managing local relief funds for the poor) are the types of ministries to identify.
 - Of these, which ones does your congregation support? You will want to help your students see the ways they participate in making sure that the vision of the Rule of God that “no one is without” is being realized through your congregation.
 - If no such support is being offered, then you have something else important to discuss!

Background

Luke is the author of both the Gospel that bears his name and the Book of Acts. When Jesus addresses the disciples in the Gospels, he is addressing the church. The work of the disciples (and thus the church) is to do the work of Jesus. In Luke's theology, God gives the Holy Spirit to enable precisely that to happen.

Pray for your students as you prepare this week's lesson.

Facilitating the Lesson

As the class begins, welcome the class and engage in your usual opening exercises (taking attendance, collecting an offering, prayer concerns, other announcements, etc.).

Opening Activity

Ask the class to imagine what a world might look like where no one was in need—where everyone had “enough” of whatever was required to not be hungry, thirsty, naked, or lonely.

- Is such a vision realistic?
- Is it biblical?
- How could such a world come into being?
- Would someone need to be willing to give “something up” in order for someone else to “have”?

Scripture Reflection

Read the following texts from the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts (ask individual students to read different passages):

- Luke 5:1–11
- Luke 12:13–21
- Luke 16:19–31
- Luke 4:16–30
- Acts 2:37–43
- Acts 4:32–37
- Acts 6:1–7

Video Segment

Have the class watch the video on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/wkKSATt5NMg>

Discussion Questions

Invite the class to wrestle with the following:

1. What We Have to Share

Everyone has something to share. It could be something like money, time, or love.

- What do you have that you can share in a “Lukan” way—something that helps people experience more “Realm of God” qualities like those expressed in the Book of Acts?

2. Life in Common

Luke pictures the early church in Acts as having all things in common.

- How would you feel about doing that yourself?
- What would it take for you to consider becoming part of such a community?
- Is it realistic? If so, how?

- If not, how might we (or should we?) approximate such conditions?

3. Wealth and Security

The barn builder in Luke 12 and the rich person in Luke 16 view material resources and wealth as a means of security. Their attitude toward wealth brings judgment on them.

- Do you see similar attitudes in our culture?
- Do you see signs that our culture might collapse under the weight of these “old age” values and practices?

4. The Illusion of Enough

- Can we ever have “enough” to protect ourselves from the world of disaster and calamity?

5. Serving the Community

In Acts 6, the church called the deacons to serve as God’s representatives in providing for the material needs of two groups of widows in the church.

- What might the deacons in your congregation do to become more like the steward-deacons in Acts?

6. God’s Vision for the World

- Is the notion of everyone’s needs being met “pie in the sky” and not realistic?
- Is it the way God wills the world to be?
- If it is what God desires, to what extent do we ignore it at our own peril?

Closing

Close the class time with prayer.

This is part of a 7-session series on Stewardship in the Second Testament, designed to be used as a Sunday School or small group lesson. Content is provided by Rev. Dr. Ron Allen in partnership with the Center for Faith & Giving (www.centerforfaithandgiving.org).