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LET'S REVIEW — Holding phrases for the four Gospels. Memorize the following four statements! These hold the key to understanding the four Gospels.

MATTHEW: Jesus' Teaching Manual for living the deeply satisfied life;

MARK: Our mission is to awaken those spiritually asleep;

LUKE: Jesus and Jesus' message is the same;

JOHN: The meaning of our baptismal experience.

TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

IHOP BIBLE STUDY

29 Topic: "The Fulfillment" – study page.

Luke 24: 1 – 53: Luke 24:1 – 12, "The Resurrection;" Luke 24: 13 – 35, "On the Road to Emmaus;" Luke 24: 36 – 59, "Jesus Appears to the Disciples;" Luke 24: 50 – 53, "The Ascension."

The purpose of the Gospel of Luke is told in the opening verses in the first chapter, ". . . it seemed good to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught." It is this "orderly account" that provides the organization of our study material. **This is lesson number 29 of 29.**

NOTE: Now, the danger is the familiarity of the story. We celebrate this part of the story so intensely, and so frequently, that we believe we know all there is to know. That's the danger of "Head Trip Analysis." When we apply Gut Trip Analysis we'll experience something brand new.

In Luke's gospel there are three times when Jesus is *turned inside out*. Our Luke chart reveals this clearly. The first seven chapters of Luke "Affirm Who Jesus Is." Then, in 9: 18 – 27 and vss. 28 – 36, in Peter's confession and the events on the Mt of Transfiguration, Jesus is totally transparent. Now in the final chapters of 19:20 through 24:50 Jesus stands before us as clear as spring water (alright, as Living Spring Water).

It is from these scriptures that we can presume Luke's purpose as "Affirming the Life, Message and Demonstration of Jesus' Message. In our last four lessons we experience "The Fulfillment of The Message."

A HELPFUL INSIGHT. At this point in the study of Luke, it is helpful to remind ourselves that Luke's purpose is "Affirming the life, message and demonstration of Jesus' Message." Over and over in this study we examined Jesus the messenger and Jesus the Message; Jesus delivers himself!

At this point, please read the attached material written by Leonard Sweet in his latest book *Out of the Question. . . Into the Mystery*. Sweet affirms this point better than I can say it. One reason I do this is that the crucifixion, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ is so profound. We need all the help we can get. However, it takes "new eyes" to see it again and again. Enjoy. Afterwards, move on to the assignment.

Observe that Sweet says two amazing statements. Truth is not objective. Truth is a relationship. The truth is Jesus Christ! Jesus embodies a relationship to Perfect At-One-Ment or God. Here we have it: "The messenger" and "The message" are one and the same. When we have a relationship to Jesus Christ, we are living in Truth. We are living the Whole Life. Fantastic!

Now, we are prepared to read today's lesson.

I. Read the assignment, and for each section, answer the question "What does this say about Jesus the messenger," "What is the message," and "What difference does it make in my life, or *Do you know the Man?*"

Alright, talk to me.

Part III – Our Relationship with God’s Story

Chapter 5 – “The Truth in Text”

Sweet, Leonard. *Out Of The Question. . . Into The Mystery*. Colorado Springs: WaterBrook Press. 2004.

The truth of God is closer to a marriage than it is to a wedding announcement. The announcement contains in clear words the facts surrounding the names of the couple, the date of their wedding, and their intentions to join their lives together. There is no disputing the facts. But that’s not the truth as God embodies truth. God’s truth is a marriage, not a wedding announcement. When two people marry they aren’t saying yes to vows (objective statements of intention) so much as they are saying yes to each other (a relationship). Some of the wedding ceremonies I remember attending as a child still used the ancient language of the liturgy: “I plight thee my troth.” This charming phrase means “I covenant with you my truth,” although it has been reduced to the less strenuous and less poetic “I give you my love.” (p. 66.)

Until a few centuries ago, “truth” had no independent status outside of relationships with and obligations to God and to others. When read in this light, the following biblical admonitions have a very different ring to them.

“I am the way, the truth, and the life.”

“You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”

The wedding liturgy’s plight-thee-my-truth language beckons us back to a biblical drama where **Absolute Truth was embodied not in an abstract but in a Person. . .** (*Emphasis is mine.*)

But Jesus is not a checklist; he is the Curriculum Vitae of Christianity. He is the object and the end of written creeds and confessions. . . They all exist to point us to the Person of Christ, not to themselves. When we “affirm” our faith, the words we say aren’t what we are affirming. Our words are affirming Jesus the Christ, our crucified, risen and ascended Lord. **The wisdom of God is not truth explained but Truth embodied.** Jesus can’t be nailed down. Nail him to wooden dogmas and locked-tight, shrink-wrapped doctrines, and the Holy Spirit pulls a Harry Houdini: Jesus breaks free every time. (p. 67.) (*Emphasis is mine.*)

A WHOLE NEW CATEGORY OF TRUTH

On 3 July, 2002, Christianity lost one of its most unusual and unheralded voices. Michel Henry was widely celebrated among philosophers in Europe and Japan, but remained virtually unknown in North America. . .

The “extraordinary originality of Christianity,” Henry insisted, lies in its very conception of truth. In fact, the Christian understanding of truth is of such “radical foreignness,” differing from all other kinds of truth and violating “everything that common sense, philosophy, and science, call (and continue to call) ‘truth,’ that Henry proposed that Christianity invented a whole new category of truth.

What kind of truth does Christianity offer the world? A form of truth that Henry believed “has the power to reduce the two others [truth in language and philosophy] to insignificance.” In a word, the truth of Christianity is life, and the “whole life” is Jesus: “In him was Life” Or in Jesus’s own words, “I have come that you might have Whole Life.” . Thus the truth is not certainty, nor is it doubt—both of which reject Christ. . .

The essential content of Christianity is Christ, who dares name himself the Way, the Truth, and the Life. . . In the black church tradition, the question is not “Are you saved?” but “Do you know the Man?” (p. 69.) (*Emphasis is mine.*)