

My comments are in Lucida Sans Unicode 12 pt. The comments of Gene Mace are in blue. IHOP Bible Study members, please plan to briefly review some of this on Tuesday morning. See you then. Everyone in the area is invited to attend each Tuesday morning at 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Peace. Pastor Bill.

**TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
IHOP BIBLE STUDY**

Topic: Luke 5: 33 to 6: 16: Third Demo: "Authority is questioned."

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.

The reflective studies forming the chart of Luke's gospel reveals the overall title of "Affirming The Life, Message, and Demonstration of Jesus' Message." This theme has three major sections: "Affirming The Life of Jesus Christ" (1:1 – 7: 50); "Fourteen Themes of Jesus' Message (8: 1 – 21: 4); "Affirming the Transparent Jesus" (21: 5 – 24: 50). There are 31 lessons in this series.

The uniqueness of Luke's gospel is discovered in the "Fourteen Themes of Jesus' Message." This material encompasses 58 pericopes. A "pericope" can be associated with the subsections titled in the chapters of most bible translations. Sometimes some translations differ, and some leave this titling out altogether. For our purposes, this material is grouped into fourteen themes. This work is aided by the chart work previously done. This thematic approach is unique and, as you will discover, it is an interesting endeavor. The study of this thematic material begins in session 8.

This is lesson number 5 of 31. In lessons 3, 4, and 5 we experience the way Luke "Demonstrates the Authority of Jesus." In this session, Jesus' touches the lives of those who question Jesus' authority.

- I. **Read the assigned reading at one time.**
- II. **Again, this session only covers three pericope (small, titled Bible sections).** Observe that the last two study pages, along with this study page, have a similar pattern; each study ends with Jesus building his ministry team. In chapters 4: 14 to 5: 11---Jesus rejected at Nazareth, Jesus drives out an Evil Spirit, Jesus Heals many, and The calling of the First Disciples. In chapter 5: 12 to 5: 32---The man with Leprosy, Jesus heals a paralytic, and The calling of Levi. In today's lesson this same pattern exists: 5: 33 to 6: 16---Jesus questioned about Fasting, Lord of the Sabbath, and naming The Twelve Apostles.
This is a pattern that the Luke Chart discovered, and this pattern is the reason why these few pericope are studied in this same series. Off the top of my head, I can not understand why Luke uses this pattern. None of the commentaries I've reviewed make note of it—unfortunately, commentary writers do not use the charting process. If anyone can take a guess at any significance to this pattern, please respond.

III. **vss. 5: 33 to 5: 39 — Jesus Questioned about Fasting**

Note that these few verses contain three little pericopes. Unless someone sees a different pattern, two of them are related.

1. **vss. 5: 33 to 5:35 – The question concerning fasting.** The audience is the Pharisees. It is helpful to recall that the Pharisees are interested in maintaining purity of practice according to the ancient Torah—the first five books of the Hebrew Testament, including the 10 Commandments.

Reflect on what the problem is and the significance of Jesus' response. Keep it Gut-Trip Analysis.

GM: I have never seen any value in fasting though I have known people who consider it a way of physically cleansing their system. All others seemed to do it as a means of demonstrating their piety. Some have used it as a means of striving to better understand what some starving folk experience. Even that, though, is a bit of a paper tiger. I suppose that it may have some value in breaking our addiction to the pleasure of eating. It seems to me that Jesus is saying that there is more importance than just observing some purity codes, particularly when they do not really respond to human need.

WS: There are two approaches to several of these pericopes concerning Jesus' authority. The Head Trip Analysis is that those concerned about fasting represent the old way of doing things—this is the position of the Pharisees. Because Jesus represents a new way of life, there is no need to fast.

The second approach seeks to answer the question posed at last Tuesday's IHOP Bible study, "What does it mean to have Jesus in your heart?" The Gut Trip Analysis is that "Jesus" represents those who are awake, while the "Pharisees" represent those who are asleep. Also, the Pharisees represent those "on vacation," or those 'living in the desert.' To have Jesus in your heart is to live in the royal feast presented in the Spiritual Oasis.

2. **vss. 5: 36 – This one-verse pericope concerns whether to patch an old garment or not.** Reflect briefly on the deeper significance of what Jesus is doing here, and what does Luke want us to experience?

GM: A parallel comes to mind for me, i.e. tearing down old buildings and building new from the ground up as the saying goes.

I think that the essence of what Jesus is saying here relates to moving away from old ways of viewing into new ways. Trying to hang onto the old and integrate the new dilutes both, and we don't really change anything. An example of this that I have seen relates to an administrative fad of a few years ago called TQM (Total Quality Management). It had some good ideas, but the administrative structures didn't really turn to the new. They just called the old by a different name. Nothing really changed. There is a call here for a radical change. The caveat here is that radical does not mean extreme as some like to proclaim. The change has to be at a basic, internal, dynamic level and not just at some surface verbal level.

WS: Yep! Gene, I concur. The way I talk about "The change has to be at a basic, internal, dynamic level. . ." is to note the change in our experience; i.e., remaining in the desert, or living wholly in the Spiritual Oasis (the Kingdom of God).

Actually, we have it both ways because to live "in the desert" is to live The Way Life Is. Then, to live in the Spiritual Oasis is the experience of finding the peace that passes understanding right in the middle of our desert experiences.

3. **vss. 5: 37 to 5: 39 – This two-verse pericope concerns how best to store new wine.** Reflect briefly on the deeper significance of what Jesus is doing here, and what does Luke want us to experience?

GM: The interesting part of this comparison involves the logistic problem of putting new, fermenting wine into old skins. The old skins have lost their elasticity. The new wine emits gas in the fermentation process and expands the space needed for the process. Since the old wineskins can't flex, they can only burst, and the wine is lost. I think we are being told here again that we need inner change and not only behavioral change.

WS: Exactly! The question becomes, "What does it mean to have Jesus as your Savior?" Gene, this question will drive your old Nazarene background nuts! However, what drives us nuts is the old Head Trip Analysis. The Gut Trip Analysis is that Jesus represents

the Awakened (new gas). The old wine skins represent those still asleep.

IV. vss. 6: 1 to 6: 11 --- Lord of the Sabbath

Again, in these few verses we observe two smaller pericopes.

1. **vss. 6: 1 to 6: 5 – Still, the audience is the Pharisees.** Their concern is Jesus *doing work on the Sabbath*. Take a few minutes to brood about Jesus answer. Avoid Head-Trip Analysis. What does Jesus want us to experience as he tells the story of “David and his companions.”

GM: The ultimate value of life is human life and well being (At-One-Ment) and not tradition. Tradition and icons must give way because they are of secondary value. They are tools. The virtue of tools is that they are servants, not masters. I am brought to think of a song we composed in Seminary Singers at Perkins. (I may have shared this previously). The song goes like this: “Oh, the first noel was good for the people. The first noel was good for the people. When the people first heard the first noel, they built the steeple. Now they’d rather have the steeple than the first noel.”

WS: Interesting. It is easy to slip into the status quo for all of us. The IHOP Bible Study spent some time reflecting about the role of the Pharisees. They decided that the Pharisees represent the dynamic of preserving the present on behalf of the future. “The Steeple” is needed, to be sure, because—as you say—it is a tool.

However, it is Jesus who represents the “freedom to be authentic.” This is to say that authenticity represents creativity and honest humane motives.

2. **vss. 6: 6 to 6:11 – The audience is both the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who are now looking for a reason to get rid of Jesus.** The background issue still is doing things on the Sabbath. What’s going on here?

GM: The Pharisees and teachers are trying to maintain the tradition and icons. They see Jesus as a threat to that which they consider to be providing security for them and the socio-political structures of their day. Jesus is threatening their security by saying that the socio-political norms are not of final value, i.e. their value is limited.

WS: Gene, you are on to something here. The question I want you to respond to is what are the "socio-political norms" that are of "final value." My old question is, "If I was walking down the street and I saw someone representing the "final values" what would I be seeing?"

For me, living out of "final values" means to bring who I am and what I do to the table of living. For me, this means bringing all my gifts, as well as all my foibles, and surrendering them to the Spiritual Oasis. This is the only way I can authentically live in the Spiritual Oasis; i.e., that is to bring everything I am/do, and not suck any of my significance out of it. My significance is found in At-One-Ment.

THE UNDERLYING QUESTION IS WHAT DO THESE PERICOPE IMPLY ABOUT THOSE QUESTIONING JESUS' AUTHORITY? The easiest answer is that those still asleep keep thinking they are awake. When Jesus comes along to demonstrate a different experience, those still asleep are offended. This is the beginning of the process of killing the messenger in order to prevent the message. The deepest offense is the slap in the face that says, "Wake Up!" when I believed all along "I am awake."

V. vss. 6: 12 to 16 --- The Twelve Apostles

Do some research in a commentary on the significance of the word "Apostles." Compare this term to the word "Disciple." Draw some conclusions on what is going on in Jesus mind, and what is it Luke wants us to experience.

GM: As near as I can figure, the term, "Apostles" relates to those "Disciples" (followers) in that it indicates someone who is specially appointed. In essence they are the ones appointed to speak out and proclaim the faith. Disciples are essentially those who hear and believe.

WS: Gene: I guess my question is how do we know when we are "specially appointed" to speak out and proclaim the faith? What is the experience we have that gives us this permission? My own answer is we decide to live authentically, which is the decision to live humanely and bring all of my gifts and foibles to the table. Of course, I frequently fail. Then, I make a new decision to do it all

over again. This message becomes the Good News that nothing is held back. As Tillich reports, I am accepted just as I am.

In this way, "Apostles" are the Awakened. It is being AWAKE that gives us permission to share the message. "Disciples" are those who find this message releasing and choose to model their lives on the model set by the Apostles.

All right, folks. Talk to me.