

The Empty Room Class

A new class in an empty room
that we hope won't be empty for long!
Sundays 9:50 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall
Featuring Coffee & Conversation
Downtown First UMC • Lexington, KY



Week 4

Are you new to Lexington?

To Christian faith?

To Downtown First UMC?

Do you want a safe place to explore
questions or doubts about Christianity?

Do you want to grow in your faith and friendships?

Then **The Empty Room Class** is for YOU!

B10 Israel During the Time of Jesus

Birth of Jesus 2 B.C.E.
Death of Jesus 33 C.E.

4000 B.C.E. 2000 B.C.E. B.C.E./C.E. 2000 C.E.

Ruled by Herod Archelaus, later by Roman Governor Pontius Pilate

Ruled by Herod Antipas

Ruled by Philip

• Cities of the Decapolis

— Via Maris

— King's Highway

— Jesus' Journey to Jerusalem



The Empty Room Class

Close Encounters of the Christ Kind in the Gospel of Luke - Part Four

Share this booklet, or a link to it at www.doncummings.com,
with a friend and invite them to join us in The Empty Room!

Class Leaders – Don & Bonnie Cummings
Study guides for this series are prepared by Don Cummings

The Panoramic View An Outline of the Gospel of Luke by Fred B. Craddock

Preface

Luke 1:1 - 4

Part One: Infancy and Childhood Narratives

Luke 1:5 – 2:52

Part Two: Preparation for the Ministry of Jesus

Luke 3:1 - 4:13

Part Three: The Ministry of Jesus in Galilee

Luke 4:14 – 9:50

Part Four: The Journey to Jerusalem

Luke 9:51 – 19:28

Part Five: The Ministry in Jerusalem

Luke 19:29 – 21:38

Part Six: The Passion Narrative

Luke 22:1 – 23:56

Part Seven: The Resurrection Narrative

Luke 24:1 – 53

The Closer View

Close Encounters of the Christ Kind During Jesus' Journey to Jerusalem

Luke 18:18-30, 39-43 and 19:1-10

Session Three of this series used the Bible study method of Lectio Divina (Devine Reading) to experience the story of Lazarus and the Rich Man. Session Four will study three more encounters Jesus had with people on his way to Jerusalem using the SOAPY Bible study method. The three encounters selected for this session all come near the end of Jesus' journey to Jerusalem. Luke 19:26 begins the account of Jesus' Triumphal Entry.

The story of Lazarus and the Rich Man underscores that the Scriptures are sufficient for the generation of faith. How is faith generated and how do the Scriptures help in the generation of faith? Paul says, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17 KJV). We hear best when we take time to study deeply the Scriptures. The SOAPY Bible Study Method gives students a way to allow Scripture to generate faith in them.

The SOAPY Bible Study Method Applied to Three Close Encounters of the Christ Kind

The Rich Ruler -- Luke 18:18-30

The Blind Beggar -- Luke 18:35-43

Zacchaeus the Tax Collector -- Luke 19:1-10

The SOAPY Bible study method fully embraces the understanding that the church interprets Scripture by *listening to the texts*, and by *seriously interrogating the texts*.

Read each Scripture in this week's study aloud to your own ear or listen to a free audio version of the Bible available at <https://www.biblegateway.com/resources/audio/?recording=niv-mclean>.

THE SOAPY BIBLE STUDY METHOD

Bible Study is of the utmost importance to growing in Christian discipleship. Churches offer Bible studies in a variety of settings, from small group discussions to pastor-led studies. Each study offers a wealth of understanding of the scripture and a depth of meaning for growth and maturity in the Christian faith.

Daily Bible study leads us in our own transformation as well as transforms our mission and ministry as a congregation. As you work through the Bible, accept the challenge to enter into the study of some key passages of the biblical story.

Get a journal or notebook and follow the SOAPY Bible Study instructions below for what to write in your journal each day. Keeping a journal of your observations, insights, applications to life and prayers each day will increase the effectiveness of studying the biblical story.

The SOAPY Bible Study is a five-part approach to reading and applying scripture to your daily life. SOAPY stands for:

S - SCRIPTURE: Read the scripture passage aloud so you can hear it. Second, write every word of the scripture, or at least the key verses of longer passages, in your journal. Both reading it aloud and writing it will help put the scripture in your mind and heart.

O - OBSERVATION: Use the questions after each Scripture passage in the reading schedule below. The first few questions are designed to lead you into the text. After working on those specific questions for each passage, also ask yourself "What is God teaching me in this scripture?" This last question each day is designed to lead the meaning of the text out to you. As you ask yourself these questions, your mind will be full of thoughts. Write those thoughts down. You will know what is being communicated as you reflect upon what you have written.

A - APPLICATION: Ask yourself the question, "How does this scripture apply to my life?" As you reflect upon the question, look for promises to claim, attitudes to change, challenges to accept, sins to confess, commands to obey, actions to take, examples to follow, or skills to learn. Write in your journal how the scripture applies to you and to your life situations.

P - PRAYER: Write a prayer to God. Depending on what you have read and written the prayer might be one of praise and thanksgiving, a prayer asking God to help you apply the teaching to your life, or a prayer of confession. This is your prayer to God. The discipline of writing your prayer will lead to transformation.

Y - YIELDING: As you complete your "SOAPY" Bible Study, ask yourself the question, "What of my life must I yield to God?" This is the question that leads to obedience. Every day, through Bible study, you will have the opportunity to yield a little more of your life to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. A prayer to use each day that leads to yielding is, "Lord, by your grace, grant me the obedience to yield another part of my life to you today."

The scriptures for this week's SOAPY Bible Study are stories of three encounters Jesus had on his way to Jerusalem. He had a conversation with a rich ruler, he healed a blind beggar, and he had lunch with a tax collector named Zacchaeus. Spend two days with each story working through the five steps of the SOAPY Bible study. On the seventh day, review all three stories along with your journal observations about these encounters. Have you had any new insights?



My SOAP Journal

Scripture

Prayerfully write out the verse of scripture in your journal or notebook.

Observation

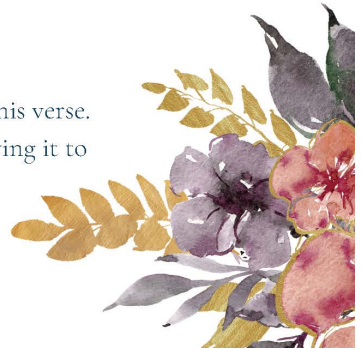
What stands out to you about this verse?
What does God want you to learn from this
verse?

Application

How can you apply this verse to your life
today?

Prayer

Spend time with God about this verse.
Ask Him to help you in applying it to
your life.



Scripture



Observation

Application



Prayer



A printable copy of these journal pages is posted on www.doncummings.com with The Empty Room Class Study Guides. A one page version is also available there.

Questions for the Observation Step
Use the Journal Page Above to Write your
Observations

Day 1 & 2: The Rich Ruler – Luke 1:18-30

What may have caused the rich ruler to seek out Jesus? What was his concern? With respect to his riches, what paradigm (view of reality) was he operating under? What did he ask Jesus? What choice did Jesus present to him? What did the rich ruler decide? Was he happy with his decision? Why or why not? What speaks to you in this story? What is God teaching you here?

Day 3 & 4: The Blind Beggar – Luke 18:35-43

What was the situation of the man in this story? How was he treated by the crowds around Jesus? How did Jesus treat him? When Jesus asked him what he wanted, what did the man say? What did Jesus do? How did the man respond? What speaks to you in this story? What is God teaching you here?

Day 5 & 6: Zacchaeus the Tax Collector – Luke 19:1-10

What does this story tell you about Zacchaeus? Why was he interested in seeing Jesus? What happened when Jesus noticed him in the tree? In that moment of recognition or contact, what happened in Zacchaeus? How did he respond to his encounter with Christ? What assurance did Jesus give Zacchaeus? What speaks to you in this story? What is God teaching you here?

Day 7: Review and Reflection

Review the three encounter stories to see if there is a common theme they all share. Every encounter with Christ confronts a with a choice. What are those choices? What did each person in these three encounters choose? How did their choice affect them? Put yourself in each story. If you were the rich ruler, the blind beggar, the tax collector, how

would you respond to your encounter with Christ? How would your response affect your life? Are you willing to make that response now?

Insights from Commentaries

Read this section only after you have completed the SOAPY steps.

The Rich Ruler

[In the story of the rich ruler] we have the secret and the tragedy of this rich ruler. He was living utterly selfishly. He was rich, and yet he gave nothing away. His real God was comfort, and what he really worshipped were his own possessions and his wealth. That is why Jesus told him to give it all away. Many a man uses such wealth as he has to bring comfort and joy and good to his fellow-men; but this man used it for nobody but himself. If a man's god is that to which he gives all his time, his thought, his energy, his devotion, then wealth was his god. If he was ever to find happiness he must be done with all that and live for others with the same intensity as that with which he had so long lived for himself. . . . Why should it be so? The whole tendency of possessions is to shackle a man's thoughts to this world. He has so big a stake in it that he never wants to leave it, and never thinks of anything else. It is not a sin to have much wealth--but it is a danger to the soul and a great responsibility. (Barclay, *The Daily Study Bible*, Luke 18:18-30)

The Blind Beggar

The reader recognizes, of course, that more is going on there than Jesus simply enabling a blind beggar to see flowers and trees and the faces of family and friends, remarkable as that is. On another level Jesus opens the eyes of the blind. Jesus is hailed as Messiah; the beggar is declared to be well (v. 18:42; recall that the word also means "saved," (17:11-19) and will be so used in the next

story 19:1-10 [Zacchaeus]); the beggar becomes a disciple, following Jesus to Jerusalem; the beggar glorifies God (again, recall 17:11-19). Luke 18:35-43 is thus both a healing and a salvation story. In addition, the event anticipates the entry into Jerusalem. This is evident not only in the proximity of Jericho to Jerusalem but also in the swelling crowds both in front of and behind Jesus, in the hailing of Jesus as Messiah, and in glorifying and praising God. (Craddock, *Interpretation: Luke*, p. 217)

Zacchaeus the Tax Collector

Zacchaeus took steps to show all the community that he was a changed man. When Jesus announced that he would stay that day at his house, and when he discovered that he had found a new and wonderful friend, immediately Zacchaeus took a decision. He decided to give half of his goods to the poor; the other half he did not intend to keep to himself but to use to make restitution for the frauds of which he had been self-confessedly guilty.

In his restitution he went far beyond what was legally necessary. Only if robbery was a deliberate and violent act of destruction was a fourfold restitution necessary ([Exodus 22:1](#)). If it had been ordinary robbery and the original goods were not restorable, double the value had to be repaid. ([Exodus 22:4](#); [Exodus 22:7](#)). If voluntary confession was made and voluntary restitution offered, the value of the original goods had to be paid, plus one-fifth ([Leviticus 6:5](#); [Numbers 5:7](#)). Zacchaeus was determined to do far more than the law demanded. He showed by his deeds that he was a changed man. . . .

The story ends with the great words, the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost. We must always be careful how we take the meaning of this word lost. In the New Testament it does not mean damned or doomed. It simply means in the wrong place. A thing is lost when it has got out of its own place into the wrong place; and when we find such a thing, we return it to the place it ought to

occupy. A man is lost when he has wandered away from God; and he is found when once again he takes his rightful place as an obedient child in the household and the family of his Father. Barclay, *The Daily Study Bible*, Luke 18:18-30).

Sources:

(All web links are active in the online version of the study guides at www.doncummings.com)

Barclay, William, *The Daily Study Bible: Luke*, commentary on Luke 9:18-27: Westminster Press, 1956. Find the entire Daily Study Bible series here: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/eng/dsb.html>

Craddock, Fred B., *Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching Luke*, John Knox Press: Louisville, 1990

Hughes, R. Kent, *Preaching the Word: Luke Volume One*, Crossway Books: Wheaton, Illinois, 1998

Also find William Barclay's complete set of *The Daily Study Bible* commentaries for free online reading at

<https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/eng/dsb.html>

These files are public domain.

Text Courtesy of BibleSupport.com. Used by Permission.

Ray Vander Laan video course *That the World May Know*

<https://www.thatttheworldmayknow.com/>

From Todd Nelson's blog at <https://jtoddnelson.com/2021/09/09/day-21-of-21/>

- [Vanderbilt](#) has a website devoted to the lectionary. It will give you the weekly readings and some other resources.
- The [Upper Room](#) is a daily devotional from the United Methodist Church and has been a regular read for many.
- [Text Week](#) is a great resource based on the lectionary with devotional guides, sermons, and other study resources.
- [Max Lucado](#) is one of my favorite authors and he does a good job with a daily devotional that can be sent directly to your email every morning.

See www.doncummings.com for copies of the weekly study guide for this class.

Contact class leader at don_cummings@msn.com

Additional One Page Journal Worksheets

BIBLE <i>study</i>	today is:
---------------------------	-----------

I am grateful for

I am praying for

SCRIPTURE

Observations

Application

PRAYERFUL RESPONSE

DEARCRISSEY.COM

A printable copy of this free journal worksheet is available at www.doncummings.com with The Empty Room Class study guides

BIBLE <i>study</i>	today is:
---------------------------	-----------

I am grateful for

I am praying for

SCRIPTURE

Observations

Application

PRAYERFUL RESPONSE

DEARCRISSEY.COM

A printable copy of this free journal worksheet is available at www.doncummings.com with The Empty Room Class study guides

BIBLE <i>study</i>	today is:
---------------------------	-----------

I am grateful for

I am praying for

SCRIPTURE

Observations

Application

PRAYERFUL RESPONSE

DEARCRISY.COM

A printable copy of this free journal worksheet is available at www.doncummings.com with The Empty Room Class study guides.