



Ripple  
Effect

MODULE 3 | **The Real Jesus**

**Leader's Guide**



# Session 1

## Why read Luke's Gospel?

*Each session begins with a box containing the key idea, encouragement, challenge, and goals of the session. It will help you keep the group on track.*

**Key idea:** *Luke records eye-witness accounts of Jesus so that people might know Jesus and the forgiveness he brings, and choose to follow him.*

**Key encouragement:** *Trust God to speak about Jesus, through his word, as you invite people to read Luke's Gospel with you.*

**Practical challenge:** *Pray regularly for people to become Christian.*

**Session goals:**

- *Orientation to Ripple Effect 3.*
- *Consider who you could ask to read Luke with you and pray for them.*
- *Discuss reasons to read Luke with someone investigating Jesus.*
- *Know that God speaks through his word and Spirit about Jesus.*

### Session Introduction

Watch the Ripple Effect Module 3 introduction video.

In this Ripple Effect Module (RE3 – The Real Jesus) you will learn how to read Luke's Gospel with someone who is not yet a Christian. Why read Luke's Gospel with someone investigating Jesus? Because in the pages of Luke's biography of Jesus they will meet the 'real Jesus' and be able to make an informed decision about whether to trust and follow him.

### Share

*If there are more than four people in your group consider dividing into smaller groups for this part of the session so that everyone has a chance to share. You might keep the same groups for the entire module, or you could mix up the groups each session. Do whatever seems best for your group.*

This is our first session so we'll spend time getting to know each other. Since we are learning to invite people to read Luke's Gospel with us, we'll share our favourite gospel story with each other.

- Introduce yourself to the group.
- Why are you participating in RE3?
- What is your favourite story about Jesus or told by Jesus? Why is it your favourite?

*Listen carefully to people's answers. It will help you understand what they want from this module and any apprehension they have about reading the Bible with someone.*

*As the leader, you can set the tone for the group by being honest and vulnerable when you share.*

*Encourage people to stick to a couple of minutes of sharing each. It will be too much time for some people and not enough for others. We'll be sharing at the start of each RE3 session so there will be plenty of opportunity to get to know each other in future sessions.*

*Time constraints reflect the reality of evangelism. We often find ourselves with limited time, and unfinished conversations that we want to pick up again later. Embrace the 'feeling' of evangelism in RE3 sessions so that your group grows comfortable with it.*

Setting group expectations.

- How can we make our group a safe and comfortable place to Share, Pray and Train together?

*Set clear group expectations so that participants know what to expect when they come. It helps make the group a safe space. These might include:*

- *Listening to and not interrupting others when they are speaking.*
- *Maintaining privacy – what people share about themselves, and their family and friends, should not go outside the group.*
- *Keeping to the agreed start and finish time.*
- *Notifying the group if you are unable to attend a session.*
- *If there is disagreement, expressing it gently and respectfully with the aim of building each other up in the Lord.*

Many of these group expectations will also be important when reading Luke's Gospel with someone investigating Jesus.

Pray.

*The group leader prays for God to be at work as we meet for the next eight sessions.*

## **Train**

*The Leader's Guide contains ideas for possible answers and trajectories. They are indicative not exhaustive, and you don't need to cover every point.*

*Encourage people to connect their responses to the Bible story that we read. When we read Luke's Gospel with someone investigating Jesus we can't expect them to have broader knowledge of the Bible than what we have just read with them.*

Watch the introduction video for Session 1.

In his introduction and conclusion, Luke tells us what to expect from his biography of Jesus.

1. Read Luke 1:1-4. Why did Luke write this book?
  - *So that readers can learn the truth about Jesus from people who were eyewitnesses to Jesus.*
2. Read Luke 24:13-35.
  - a. 'What things' (v19) had Cleopas and his friend learnt or heard about Jesus?
    - *Jesus was a prophet who did and said amazing things. People hoped that Jesus was the one who would redeem (free) Israel as promised in the Old Testament. Jesus was killed by the Jewish authorities but three days later his tomb was empty. Angels said that he was alive.*
  - b. How did Cleopas and his friend recognise that they were speaking to Jesus?
    - *Jesus did and said familiar things. He explained the Scriptures to them in a way that caused their hearts to burn within them, and he broke bread with them as he had done many times before. Their eyes were opened — a work of the Spirit.*
    - *Their experience was confirmed when they returned to the Jerusalem and heard that others also had seen Jesus alive.*
3. What encouragement do these passages give us to read Luke's Gospel with someone investigating Jesus?
  - *These are real events in the real world. They are historically grounded and reliable. Luke was not an eyewitness but he cared about truth so he investigated eyewitness accounts.*
  - *God has always worked through his word and Spirit to help people see the truth about Jesus. That was even true for the apostles and first Christians.*

- *Conversion is God's work not our work. He is the one who opens people's eyes to see Jesus and stirs their hearts to love Jesus.*
4. What additional reasons to read Luke's Gospel can you think of that would encourage someone to read it? Be creative.
- *The influence of Jesus and the Bible on Western culture, art, literature, values, etc.*
  - *Have an informed opinion from the source documents.*
  - *The themes in Luke's Gospel still resonate powerfully today. Love, hope, joy, suffering, betrayal, evil, transformation, forgiveness, etc.*
  - *Jesus has changed my life for the better and I think that knowing him could change yours too.*
5. Who would you like to invite to read Luke with you?
- a. Why them? (As you share, please remember to respect people's privacy.)
    - *As a group, decide how much information about your family and friends to share with each other. Will you use their full names or just an initial? Consider how much detail about a conversation or their life circumstances to share. What you share may depend on how many people are in your RE3 group or whether your RE3 group know or might meet your family and friends.*
  - b. How do you feel about inviting this person? What are you excited or hesitant about?

Jesus is still a recognisable name today. Millions of people love and follow him. People die for him. Whether or not people believe in him, they feel the influence of his life and teaching in many cultural values and institutions. The themes Luke addresses—love, hope, joy, suffering, betrayal, evil, transformation, forgiveness (just to name a few!)—still resonate with us today. There are all sorts of reasons for someone to read Luke's Gospel.

We invite people to read Luke's Gospel so that they can see Jesus through the eyes of people who knew him. As they read Luke, we pray that God will open their eyes to see and stir their hearts to love Jesus, just as God has graciously done for us.

## Pray

*Aim for some things to thank God for and to ask God for.*

*Sound out how comfortable people are with praying out loud in a group. If people are nervous about this, suggest they write down a sentence or two and read it out during the prayer time. Work out a way to make it a safe space for even the nervous to pray out loud. Prayer is a key part of RE3.*

What thanksgiving and prayer points flow out of:

- | our Luke passages?
- | our time of sharing?

Some members of the group may feel more comfortable praying out loud than others. Please remember that a one-sentence prayer written down and read out is just as authentic as a five-minute prayer prayed spontaneously.

## Revise

*Discuss why revising session content between sessions is important and how much time people should spend on it. Approximately 60mins? Revise activities are designed to consolidate learning and to keep evangelism on our agenda throughout the week.*

*Read through the activities so that if people have any questions they can ask them.*

After each session there will be review activities to complete at home. They are designed to consolidate learning and to keep evangelism on our agenda throughout the week.

- Complete the Relationship Network Worksheet attached to this session.
- Start reading Luke's Gospel. Each week we'll read through a section of Luke's Gospel so that by the end of the module we have read the whole book.

This week, read Luke 1:1-4:13 in one sitting. In these passages Luke tells us about Jesus' birth and his life before he began his public ministry. After you have read it answer the following questions about:

- a. Jesus: what do we learn about Jesus?

- b. People around Jesus: how did Jesus impact the lives of those around him?
  - c. Me: what particularly stood out for me in this story?
- Connect with other group members during the week. Share with each other your response to the Me question. When someone else shares spend a few minutes praying for them.

*Set up a group chat on a messaging app so that you can communicate prayer points and encouragements to each other during the week. If social media is not a helpful tool for your group then find another way to encourage each between sessions.*

*Initiate conversation between sessions by sharing your own responses to the Me question. Do this early in the week so that it also acts as a reminder to others to look at the Review activities. If anyone else shares, make sure you pray for them and respond to them.*

*We are discussing the Me question because people tend to find it easier to talk about Jesus if they are learning and growing in their own relationship with Jesus.*

### **After Session Reflection**

- *How comfortable are people sharing and praying?*
- *How competent are people at reading the Bible?*
- *What went smoothly and what do I need to rethink?*
- *Did we miss anything important?*
- *What can I do or change to make the sessions run more smoothly?*

*Don't panic if things feel clunky at the start. People will get to know each other and grow to understand how to use the material.*

*As you move through the material, you'll get an idea of where your group should spend more time or less time. Each of the Share, Pray, Train sections are important. Be careful not to always cut the same one short if you are under time pressures.*

*You'll also work out which person speaks first or longest or most authoritatively, etc. As you learn more about the people in your group, consider the best way to handle group dynamics so that everyone is encouraged to share.*

*Avoid running overtime because it discourages people from attending. Set a timer for various sections if you need to and don't feel the need to cover all the material every session.*

*Pray for yourself and the people in your group.*



# Relationship Network Worksheet

Unless we pause and reflect, we may not realise the opportunities that God has given us to proclaim the gospel to others.

Use the following diagram to:

- | identify the different relationship networks in your life.
- | list the names of people who aren't Christian that you know in your network.

As you look at your relationship network, ask yourself 'Is my list broad enough?'

Here are some ideas to broaden your list:

- | someone who catches the train at the same time you do.
- | an old school friend you saw at a wedding.
- | someone who walks the dog at the same park.
- | a 'blast from the past' whose name appeared in your Facebook feed.
- | a person at the gym.

As you look at your relationship network:

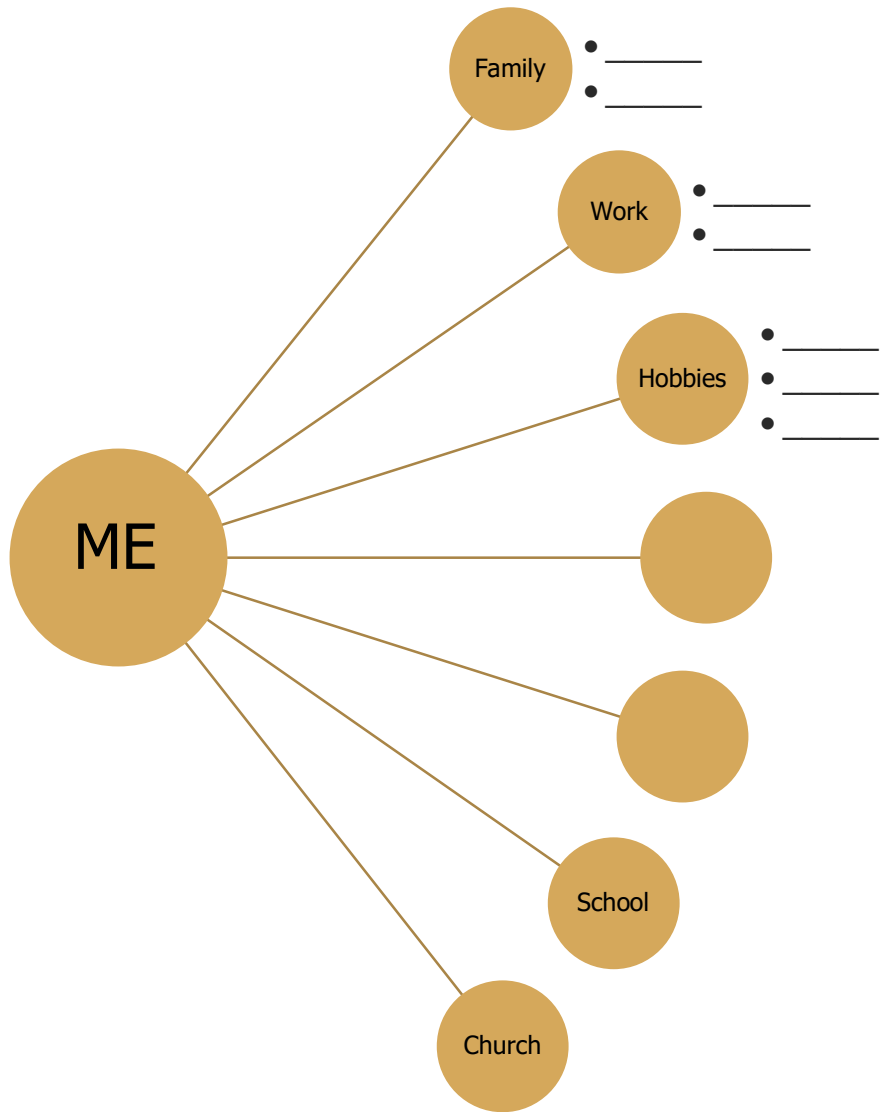
- | underline the names of people you see regularly, even if you don't know them very well yet.
- | circle the names of people you expect to see next week.

→ Choose 5 of the people you see or speak with regularly to pray for throughout RE3.

- | Include the person you shared about in Session 1.
- | These are the people we will be seeking to invite to read Luke's Gospel with us.

→ Reflect on and pray over these questions:

1. How might their lives be better if they knew Jesus?
2. Where and when do you see them?
3. What do you talk about?
4. How can you be more intentional in the way you share Jesus and your life with them?



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