



Ripple
Effect

MODULE 3 | **The Real Jesus**

Leader's Guide

Session 3

Inviting people to read Luke's Gospel

Key idea: *Our response to Jesus depends on whether we think we need forgiveness.*

Key encouragement: *Nourish your own love for Jesus by reflecting on the magnitude of his forgiveness.*

Practical challenge: *Invite someone to read Luke's Gospel with you.*

Session goals:

- *Grow increasingly familiar with the three questions: Jesus. People. Me.*
- *Practice inviting someone to read Luke's Gospel with you.*
- *Pray for each other and each other's friends.*

Session Introduction

As you wait for people to arrive, you could fill the time with casual conversation about how people found the Review exercises, whether they have seen any of the people we are praying for, etc. This doesn't have to wait until we 'officially' begin.

Watch the introduction video for Session 3.

Jesus invited anyone and everyone to come to him and experience life-changing forgiveness. When you know you need it, Jesus' forgiveness inspires love for him and brings great joy, hope and peace. By inviting people to read Luke's Gospel with us, we are inviting them to meet Jesus and enjoy his forgiveness too.

The opening paragraph summarises the 'forgiveness' theme running throughout RE3. It helps explain why RE3 uses the passages it does.

Share

From the Relationship Network Worksheet, share about two more of the five people you hope to invite to read Luke's Gospel with you.

- Share a little bit about your relationship with them. Is there anything we have read or discussed so far that might connect with them?

Pray

In the synagogue at Nazareth, at the start of his public ministry, Jesus read from the Scriptures:

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,
to set the oppressed free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.”

Luke 4:18-19 (NIV)

- | Thank God for Jesus and freedom he offers to all who trust him.
- | Pray for your family and friends. Ask God to help them come to Jesus for the true freedom that only Jesus can give.

Train

Luke’s Gospel

Let the group know that you will facilitate the Luke’s Gospel discussion (Question 1) until RE3 Session 4. After that each group member will have a turn at facilitating discussion on a passage from Luke’s Gospel. This is so that we all practice reading Luke’s Gospel others.

In our story today Jesus is at a dinner party where he meets a woman who knows that she needs forgiveness and a man who thinks he doesn’t.

1. Read Luke 7:36-50 and discuss the three questions:
 - a. Jesus: What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
 - *What does Jesus say to the woman and to Simon?*
 - *How does he treat them? What does he offer them?*
 - *What type of dinner guest is he?*
 - *How does Jesus define forgiveness?*
 - b. People: What do we learn about the people who met Jesus?
 - *Who are the people in the story?*
 - *What are they like?*
 - *What do they think and feel about Jesus? About each other? About themselves?*
 - *Do they think they need forgiveness? Why?*
 - *Who or what do they have faith in?*

- c. Me: What is my response to Jesus and this story?
- *What stood out for me in the story?*
 - *Which person am I most like?*
 - *How do I define forgiveness?*
 - *Do I need forgiveness?*
 - *What does enjoying Jesus' forgiveness mean for me?*

2. Review your discussion.

- a. Think back to each of the three questions: Jesus. People. Me. What comments or additional questions helped keep discussion focused on Jesus, moving forward and going deeper?
- b. What does this story teach us about forgiveness?
- *Jesus' forgiveness frees us to enjoy his love and to love him in return.*
 - *Forgiveness is like and feels like having all your debts cancelled.*
 - *Jesus offers forgiveness to anyone and everyone.*
 - *Denying your need for forgiveness risks judgmentalism.*
- c. What aspects of the story would you like to have discussed, or to have discussed more fully, if you had your time again?

3. What does enjoying Jesus' forgiveness mean for me?

This question is designed to help us keep growing in our own knowledge of and love for Jesus. Evangelism always comes more naturally when we enjoy our relationship with Jesus.

Give people a few minutes to think about this and then invite them to share with the group.

Skill: Invitations

We are seeking to ask people to read Luke's Gospel with us so that they will meet the 'real Jesus' and be able to make an informed decision about whether he is worth trusting and following.

Picture one of the people you are praying for. Now imagine asking this person whether they would be interested in reading Luke's biography of Jesus with you.

Be ready with a worked example for one the five people you are praying for to demonstrate this to your group.

1. What is the best thing that could happen?
2. What is the worst thing that could happen? How likely is this to happen?

In Australia, for most people most of the time, the worst that will happen when you ask a person to read Luke's Gospel with you is an uncomfortable 'No, thank you. I'm not interested.' But, be sensitive to people in your group who may have had bad experiences in evangelism.

3. Imagine a direct invitation to read Luke's Gospel with you. For example:
 - I'm doing a course at church where we are learning how to read Luke's biography of Jesus with people because ... Would you be up for it?
 - I read a story about Jesus yesterday and thought you might be interested in it because ...

Write down a sentence or two that reflects a direct approach in your own words and with your own reasons.

4. Imagine a more organic invitation to read Luke's biography of Jesus with you.
 - Is there a topic that you talk about with them that relates to forgiveness? For example: guilt, regrets, cancel-culture, justice, painful relationships, etc.
 - Is there a topic that you talk about with them regularly?

Write down a sentence or two that could help you move from this topic to an invitation to read Luke's biography of Jesus with you.

After giving your group members time to think about this and write something down, ask people to share their ideas.

If your group has completed RE1 or RE2 refer to them here. This is what these modules are designed to do. If you have not completed these modules and people find an organic approach difficult, consider whether these modules might be helpful for your group in the future.

5. Pray. Thank God for the way Jesus' forgiveness transforms us and our lives. Ask God to help us enjoy our forgiveness. Ask God for an opportunity to invite someone to read Luke's Gospel with us.

Revise

Read Luke 8-10 in one sitting. In these chapters the disciples grow in their understanding of who Jesus is and what being his disciple means. After you have read it, answer the three questions:

- Jesus: What do we learn about Jesus?
- People: What do we learn about the people who met Jesus?
- Me: What is my response to Jesus and these stories?

Consider the five people you are praying for. For each person:

- Which of the stories we have read would best connect with them?
- Which would be the most surprising?
- Ask God for an opportunity to share one of these stories with them.

Invite one of the people you are praying for to read Luke's biography of Jesus with you.

- Pray for an opportunity. Plan for an opportunity. Take a deep breath and invite them.
- If asking one of these people to read Luke's Gospel with you feels like a bridge too far at the moment, consider asking a Christian friend to read a story in Luke with you to help you practice.

Connect with other group members during the week.

- Tell each other which Bible story you would like to share with your friend and why you chose that one, or, how God has been answering our prayers.

After Session Reflection

- *How easy or difficult did people find this session?*

- *What part of the session did you focus on? What did you gloss over?*
- *What does this mean for the next session?*

Pray for yourself, your group, and the people they are praying for.

Keep learning at
ripple-effect.net.au